High court is final arbiter, lawmakers warned

Story below, Col. 1

It's red vs black in Davide's case

By Carla P. Gomez, Villamer Visaya Jr. and Vincent Cabreza

BY THE COLOR of their shirts, some people can be classified either as supporter or opponent of the ex-

TO PAGE A2

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph | Thursday, October 30, 2003 • 38 pages / vol. 18 / no. 324 | website: www.inq7.net

Ganzon family fights over his dead body

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The opposition leader detained longest during martial law, the man called the "Enemy Petrel of the South" because of his fiery speeches in Congress that did not spare the power hhos in the country, rightly deserved to die in peace and dignity.

SEE EDITION A13

THE BRAT PACK—initiators, movers of the impeachment complaint and relentless in their efforts to transmit it the Senate—bears illustrious names in the country's dynastic politics. From left,

Representatives Felix William "Wimpy" Furesteilla, Gilbert Teodoro, Mark Cojuangco, Charlie Cojuangco, Gilbert Remulla and Michael John Duavit.

ON INSIDE

No stopping us, says JDV

Impeachment rap to be transmitted on Nov. 10

By Cynthia D. Balana and Christine O. Avendaño

IGNORING the Supreme Court's status quo order, the House of Representatives yesterday agreed to transmit to the Senate on Nov. 10 the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to pave the way for his trial on charges of illegally disbursing the Judiciary Development Fund.

Nov. 10 is the resumption of the House session, which was adjourned on Tuesday on the day the Supreme Court stopped the House from immediately transmitting the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate and the Senate from accepting them.

The House of Representatives reached the decision after a five-hour caucus at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. In attendance were 24 congressmen representing five political parties.

At a press conference after the caucus, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. declared that the crisis in the House was over and that the congressmen had agreed to work on the impeachment as one.

"Never before in the history of the House that the House is more united. All political parties attended in full force," De Venecia said.

He said the congressmen agreed to question the status quo order of the Supreme Court during the scheduled deliberation on the six petitions before it on Nov. 6, and to challenge the tribunals' jurisdiction over the impeachment issue.

Besides issuing the status quo order, the Supreme Court directed members of the House and the Senate, along with the Solicitor General, to comment on the petitions against the impeachment complaint by Nov. 3. They were also ordered to appear before the high court for oral arguments on Nov. 5.

Deputy Speaker for the Visayas Raul Gonzalez and Deputy Sec. Salacnib Baterina were among those who petitioned the high tribunal to declare as unconstitutional the impeachment complaint against Davide.

Gonzalez said the second impeachment complaint against Davide was unconstitu-

NO STOPPING, A4

GAINING support for her crusade to save Davide from impeachment pats former President Cory Aquino in a pleasant mood with the Chief Justice's wife Virginia on Wednesday at the Ateneo de Manila University during a prayer rally. (Story on Page A21.)

MARI TERESA HIDALGO

Davide tormentor youngest in House

By Carlos Pablo

HE GOES by the nickname Wimpy, but for many of his colleagues in Congress Camarines Sur Rep. Felix William Furesteilla is anything but a wimp.

Furesteilla, who at 28 is the youngest congressman in the 226-strong House of Representatives, was one of the two principal complainants who filed the impeachment case against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. on Oct. 23.

He also initiated the House investigation into the Judiciary Development Fund (JDF) last year following complaints from Naga City court employees who said they had not been receiving their cost of living allowance in mandated by the JDF.

Furesteilla is a member of the Nacionalist People's Coalition and is the House assistant majority floor leader.

He holds a business administration

DAVIDE, A11

ACCIDENTAL MEETING
To avert a crisis, the House multi-party meeting was going on at the Edsa Shangri-La on Wednesday but all eyes were on PJ who just happened to be around for lunch with Sen. Tito Sotto. (Story on Page A3.)

GMA proposal to defuse political crisis

By Juliet L. Javellana and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday urged the House of Representatives and the Supreme Court to forge a covenant upholding the principle that the high tribunal "has the final authority to interpret the Constitution" and "the need for strong institutional checks and balances" among coequal branches of government.

Mr Macapagal made the proposal in a bid to defuse the political crisis over the House impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., saying the potentially explosive confrontation is hurting the economy.

In a statement, the President called on two sides to work together for the good of the nation, saying the conflict was doing "more harm than good" to the nation.

"Political bickering and partisan de-

DPOL 2A

Pimentel to challenge 'illegal' SC order

By Michael Lim Ubac, Carlos Pablo and Christine O. Avendaño

THE SUPREME COURT committed "an illegal and unconstitutional act" when it ordered Congress on Tuesday to maintain the status quo on the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., according to opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

"I will take it upon myself as a senator to challenge that ruling," Pimentel, a lawyer, said at a press conference yesterday. He said he would file today a petition asking the high court to allow him to intervene in the matter.

In Pimentel's view, the high court went "overboard" in ordering the House not to transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate, and the Senate not to accept the same.

He said the tribunal had no authority over matters related to impeachment proceedings because the impeachment court was "higher than the Supreme Court."

"It's not the Senate, but the impeachment court," he said. "It is a separate body created by the Constitution and, thus, has a constitutional mandate. We

PIMENTEL, A10

Salonga, Vidal declare Davide innocent

BASED on the evidence two civil society groups have examined, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. is innocent of the impeachment charge that he misdisposed judges and other judicial personnel P927.8 million in allowances, according to former Senate President Jovito Salonga.

"We have reviewed the relevant evidence regarding the second impeachment complaint and agreed that we should speak out to declare Chief Justice Hilario Davide is innocent," said Salonga who spoke for Kilosbayan and Bantay Sosyedad, a group of lawyers and law students from the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University

SALONGA, A11

High court is final arbiter, lawmakers warned

By Philip C. Tubeza

MAKE no mistake about it: The Supreme Court's status quo" ruling on the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. is a "judicial order" that should not be trifled with.

The warning was aired yesterday by the tribunal's spokesperson, Jozmel Khan Jr., who said the order was couched in diplomatic language only out of "interdepartmental courtesy."

"It was carefully crafted because it was also addressed to a co-equal branch of government. [But] it has the force of an order," he said.

Khan declined to say what the high court would do if the congressmen defied the order. He said any complaints and documents should be filed on Nov. 3, the day scheduled for oral arguments before the tribunal on the constitutionality of the impeachment complaint.

But former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez, one of those who had asked the high court to stop Davide's impeachment, said the tribunal could find complaining congressmen in contempt of court.

Appellate Justice Regalado Maambong, one of the seven ranks-and-file appointed by the Supreme Court for Nov. 5, said those who would violate the order could be punished for distort as indirect contempt.

HIGH COURT, A4

A1
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2004
Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FRIDAY: Cloudy and partly rainy. Moderate to occasionally strong winds from the northeast. Moderate to rough seas (2.5 to 4.0 meters). Risk of flashfloods and landslides in mountainous areas. PAGASA WARNING

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy	Batanes	Cloudy with rains
Baguio	Partly cloudy	Tuguegarao	Cloudy with rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with rains	Iba	Cloudy with rains
Iba	Partly cloudy	Aparri	Cloudy with rains
Aparri	Partly cloudy	Virac	Cloudy with rains
Virac	Partly cloudy	Catarman	Cloudy with rains
Catarman	Partly cloudy	Legazpi City	Cloudy with rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with rains	Puerto Princesa	Cloudy with rains
Tacloban	Cloudy with rains	Basco	Cloudy with rains

Terror ruled out in Cotabato blast

By TJ Burgonio

AT LEAST six persons were injured when a homemade bomb exploded in a bakery in front of a cathedral in Cotabato City Tuesday night, police said Wednesday.

But the military ruled out the involvement of the Islamic militant group Jemaah Islamiyah in the bomb attack, saying it was the handiwork of extortionists.

The bomb, hidden in a plastic bag, was left at the entrance of "Inah's Bakery" across the Immaculate Conception Cathedral by unidentified men. The device exploded at around 7:45 p.m., injuring a bakery employee and five bystanders.

Police said scientists saw the motive for the blast as the bakery had received threats from unidentified people demanding about P100,000 a month in payments.

The injured, who were identified as Elpidio Palabrica, 34; Rosalinda Diculan, 30; Rolando Tambayan, 38; Edna Pasero, 42; Antonio Yap, 43, and Sod Mangalay, were brought to nearby hospitals for treatment.

Three men, who were believed to have planted the homemade bomb, were being tracked down by troops from the army's 6th Infantry Division.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, military chief information officer, said the military was discussing 20 hard to the assault.

Lucero said local authorities believe that extortionists, who got so baffled by the owner of the pet shop, were the perpetrators in the attack, which happened on the second day of the Ramadan, the Muslims' holy month of fasting.

"The authorities are looking at the extortion angle," Lucero said.

In Midsayap, North Cotabato, police said they were convinced that the man arrested in connection with the Oct. 3 mosque explosion in Barangay Villaluca drew was the same suspect that talked to eyewitnesses before the incident.

Three people died in the blast, including two cooking terrorism officials, while more than a dozen others were injured.

Supt. Melchor Leyesa, provincial police chief, identified the suspect as Rifeh Mohalidin Abo, 35, a resident of Barangay Villaluca. Abo was arrested on Oct 25.

Chief Insp. Eduardo Marquez, Midsayap police chief, said a witness positively identified the suspect as the one who lobbed the grenade on Oct. 3.

But Abo denied carrying out the grenade attack. "That is not true, I was among those inside the mosque joining the anti-day prayer," Abo told Radio dxMS.

Abo, a chainsaw operator, is now detained at the Midsayap PNP detention cell. With reports from Edwin G. Fernandez, Rosa-May T. de Guzman and Charlie C. Senase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

PRESIDENT Macapagal-with Davao City Mayor Rody Duterte waves to supporters during a multi-sectoral rally held at the Freedom Park in Davao City. MARIO CAYETANO/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Experience a new kind of high.

Kuala Lumpur. Walk on clouds from one of the world's tallest buildings.

Be on top of the world on Philippine Airlines' newest exciting destination, Kuala Lumpur. Enjoy the comfort and convenience as we fly you direct, 4 times weekly. Both departure of Philippine Airlines flight PR307 and arrival of PR308 are at NAIA Centennial Terminal 2.

Philippine Airlines
A new level of high.

Philippine Airlines
It's about experience.
www.philippineairlines.com

• Earn double miles when you fly Manila-Kuala Lumpur-Manila from October 28 to January 31, 2005.
• Avail of Intergenerational Kuala Lumpur Holiday Package for as low as US$[illegible].

Please call PAL Reservations: Manila 855-8888; Cebu 340-0191; Davao 225-0301. Visit the nearest PAL Ticket Office or call your Travel Agent.

GMA orders manhunt for hostage killers

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered the police and the military to intensify its manhunt for the killers of five hostages seized by gunmen from a Sabah resort even as she condemned the killing as "outrageous and senseless."

"I condemn this outrageous and senseless killing as I consider with the families of the victims," Macapagal said in a statement.

His Macapagal ordered the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to block all possible exits out of the country and coordinate with Malaysian authorities to run up to the deepest.

Suspected Malaysian pirates killed five of the six workers of a resort in Sabah whom they abducted and took hostages early this month. Only one survived to tell of his harrowing experience in the hands of the abductors.

The lone survivor, Nancy Adrasil, had told authorities that his companions were murdered by the gunmen. It was unclear if any of the bodies had been recovered.

In Zamboanga City, the military yesterday said they are verifying reports that the Abu Sayyaf faction, led by Ghaffi Arabing alias commander Rahul, were involved in the abduction of the Sabah workers.

Naval Forces Western Mindanao commander Commodore George Ely told the reporters that they were waiting for the final results of the "tactical interrogation" on Nonoy.

It was Nonoy who claimed that Arabing led the group that snatched Gloria. He identified Arabing based on photos of Abu Sayyaf suspects shown him by the Tawi-Tawi police.

"He was still in a state of confusion so his revelation might not be accurate at all," Ely said.

Ely said he could not figure out how Arabing would be involved in the Sabah incident because "it was not easy for Rahul to move around." With reports from Ferdinand G. Zamora, PDI Mindanao Bureau; AFP

Missing kids now on the Net

ARE you an avid Internet surfer? Bookmark this webpage on your list of favorite websites and you might help end a parent's nightmare.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development, along with the Philippine National Police and the Department of Interior and Local Government, yesterday formally launched a website for missing children and persons below 18 years old.

The DSWD urged the public to regularly check out www.mpbpinoy.com which posts photos and basic information about the missing and report "recovered" persons and their happy reunion with their families.

Simultaneous with the launching of the website, the DSWD also opened text messaging hotlines for the public to report missing minors to authorities: 0915-851-5703 for Smart, and 0917-899-3678 for Globe users.

To send a report, key in: mc <name of child> <when, where last seen> <landline address of sender>.

The sender will then shortly receive by text an automatic reply from the DSWD saying that the report has been forwarded to the Philippine National Police and that he or she must repeat the message after 48 hours in case law enforcers have not contacted him back. Full Coverage

De Castro eyeing presidency–Angara

By Christine O. Avendaño

WHILE the nation seems in suspense by not knowing if Senator Fernando Poe Jr. is decisive whether or not he will run for president, another hugely popular media celebrity case politician is being primed for the big time.

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara told reporters that a trusted informant had told him that Sen. Noli de Castro has decided to go for the presidency in next May's polls.

De Castro, an ABS-CBN newscaster before becoming senator, has consistently topped presidential preference surveys but has so far not indicated he was interested in higher office.

"Whether he will run as an opposition or as an independent is another matter," said Angara, the president of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, the country's largest opposition party.

In a phone interview however, De Castro said despite's source may have been mistaken because he told his last and made any announcement regarding his political plans was his he said that his place is secure.

"I haven't decided yet." De Castro said, adding that he would make an announcement soon.

He said he was taking him time to make a decision because it involved every important matter.

The latest Pulse Asia survey showed De Castro topping both the presidential and vice-presidential preferences in a poll asking people whom they would likely vote for if elections were to be held today.

The survey was conducted between Aug. 28 and Sept. 10.

Of the list of possible candidates that respondents were asked to choose from, De Castro landed first, with 27 percent, followed by Raul Roco (20), President Macapagal-Arroyo (14), Fernando Poe (11), Sen. Panfilo Lacson (9).

De Castro also placed first (25 percent) among to the vice presidential preferences.

Sen. Loren Legarda was his second place (13 percent), followed by Raul Roco (8), Angara (5) and Sen. Juan Ponce (5).

Angara said that De Castro, if he should decide to run for president, would pose a "very big threat" to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

He said it was because opposition would have an chosen but to pick him in his standard bearer as he claimed to enjoy the support of the majority of his LDP party mates and several members of other political parties.

Angara also said it would be better for De Castro to run under the opposition banner than as an independent to ensure that his nominations are organized and his votes are guaranteed, come Election Day.

FPJ still hemming and hawking

By Cynthia D. Baldoz

MOVIE actor Fernando Poe Jr. yesterday said he was still undecided whether to run for president in the 2004 elections despite the new million signatures his supporters claim to have gathered in countries hop to run.

In an ambush interview at the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel where he had lunch with Sen. Vicente Sotto and two other companions, Poe said he was not sure whether he would still make an announcement regarding his candidacy.

"Hindi pa natin alam 'yon" Poe, doon's doon time pa), he said when asked when he would make the announcement.

Asked if he was willing to reject the support of two million Filipinos who affixed their signatures on a petition for him to run, Poe said he hoped that he would be able to express his gratitude to them someday.

Poe was spotted by reporters who were waiting at the adjacent room for the outcome of the multi-party caucus of congressmen on the impeachment issue.

Poe, thinking that the reporters wanted his luncheon meeting beforehand, said "Patapos na kayo ba, hindi pa naghihintay pa kayo [Are you done yet, he is still waiting for you]." Poe later said "sorry" three times in avoiding the questions of reporters.

When asked to describe the difference between politics and show biz, Poe said "As you know, politics and showbiz, there's quite a big difference."

Asked which personality more intrigues, Poe said I depends on the issue and personality involved. He then begged off from reporters, saying he was in a hurry.

Some, who were with him, said Poe had not arrived at a decision on whether to resolve president.

"Not yet. Maybe in a proper time," he added.

Youth group hails extension of voter listing

A YOUTH group yesterday hailed the decision of the Commission on Elections to extend the registration period in the first nine voters and conference.

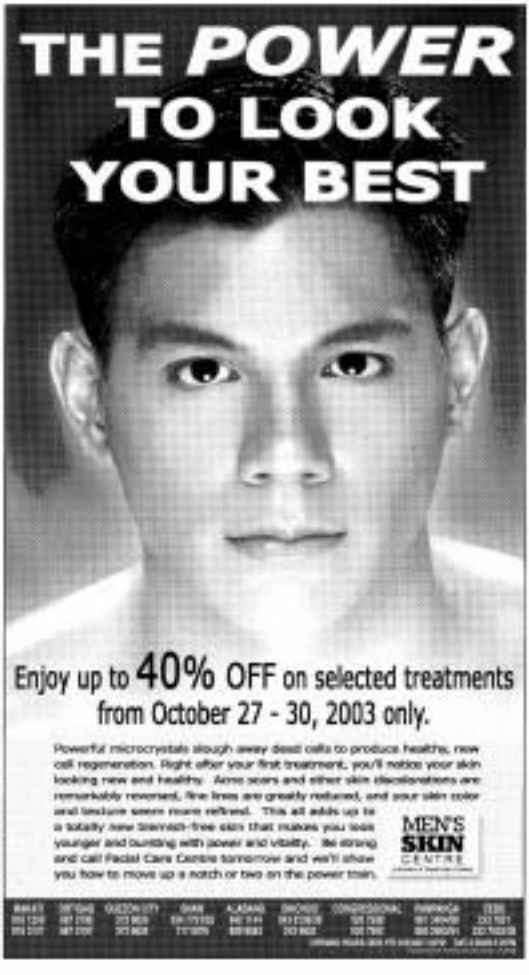
In a statement, the Anak ng Bayan youth party said the decision would allow students, who are now enjoying their semestral break, to register and participate in the May 10, 2004 elections.

"We are commending the Comelec for giving us more time..." Melvin Dadias, Anak ng Bayan secretary for the National Capital Region, said.

The youth group had earlier initiated a signature campaign asking the Comelec to extend the period of registration which was supposed to end on Oct. 31.

Comelec the other day extended the deadline of registration for first-time voters and transferees to Dec. 8. However, if the extension, the offices would be closed from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2.

Registration for first-time voters will resume Nov. 3, Monday. Marvin B. Marfil



RP pledges to send more military, medical men to Iraq

By Cl Cabacungan

THE PHILIPPINES has pledged to send more humanitarian aid and technical assistance to help in the government reconstruction of war-torn Iraq, including getting a piece of the multi-billion reconstruction fund for the war-ravaged country.

In a statement, Ambassador Roberto Romulo, senior presidential adviser and chair of the public-private sector task force on Iraq reconstruction, said the Philippines has agreed to increase its 100-man contingent troops of 360 police, military and medical personnel deployed to Iraq.

Romulo said the Philippines has likewise agreed to provide additional assistance through advice and training in health care, education, information and communications technologies, and reconstruction/development and environment management.

While the Philippines had made its monetary commitments, Romulo said the humanitarian and technical assistance were meant to increase Iraq's absorptive capacity for the assistance set.

Romulo made the pledge during the International Donors Conference (reloaded), Spain on Oct. 27 and 28 where 75 countries and non-governmental organizations pledged a total of $13 billion to aid for the reconstruction of Iraq's water, power, health care and infrastructure over the next 5 years.

"Our presence at the donors conference has put us in the wide screen of donors, contractors and the Iraqi government and will be helpful in generating information for Philippine contractors and professionals down the road," Romulo said.

Ople seeks debt relief for poor countries

By Ronald G. Lucanera

FOREIGN Affairs Secretary Blas Ople yesterday asked developed countries and international financial institutions to consider a debt swap for anti-poverty programs by poor countries like the Philippines.

Presiding over a United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development meeting on financing for development, Ople said debt swap for anti-poverty programs will help poor countries realize the UN millennium goal of slashing the population of poverty by half by the year 2015.

Ople chaired the first round-table session by 24 countries from Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America organized by the DFA to review the regional dimensions of the implementation of the commitments made in the so-called Monterrey Consensus held in Monterrey, Mexico.

Under the debt-swap scheme, debts should be forgiven provided the savings are allocated entirely to anti-poverty programs, including reforestation ... for small countries, especially in the mountainsides.

Palace confirms appointment of new VFA director

By Juliet Labog Javellana and Gerald G. Lacuesta

MALACAÑANG yesterday confirmed the appointment of a new commander director for the Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement (PHCOMVFA) following the resignation of its chief Salvador Stalder.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said retired Gen. Abadilla, the deputy chief of mission at the Philippine Embassy in Washington, has been appointed to replace Stalder.

Stalder reportedly resigned after a dispute with Foreign Secretary Blas Ople over the invitation of some United States troops allegedly involved in a drunk-driving incident in Zamboanga City last month.

Ople said he welcomed the appointment of Abadilla, a career foreign service officer and a graduate of the Ateneo Law School, and looked forward to working with him to ensure the proper implementation of the Visiting Forces Agreement.

"Ambassador Abadilla brings with him a wealth of experience in RP-US security and military matters. He also has a deep understanding of the policy basis and parameters that will guide him in his work," Ople said in a statement.

Bunye said Stalder, who cited "policy differences" with Ople as the reason for his resignation, had no right to make this claim as he was not involved in policymaking.

He said policymaking is done at the level of the foreign affairs and defense secretaries who co-chair the PHCOMVFA.

"Whatever what an executive secretary needs to do it just implements the policy that is laid down," Bunye said.

No stopping us, says JDV

final because under the Constitution, only one impeachment complaint can be filed against the same official in one year.

Dr. Venecia said he and Senate President Franklin Drilon had agreed not to appeal before the Supreme Court despite the status quo order requiring their presence.

The Speaker had also been restrained by the multi-party coalition to question the jurisdiction of the high court by engaging the services of private lawyers to argue in favor of the House.

Dr. Venecia, however, said that sending private lawyers in behalf of the House did not necessarily mean that the chamber would be submitting itself under the jurisdiction of the court, a co-equal branch of government.

"We should defend the political and territorial integrity of the House. We're responding to the order. It's not in the national interest to defy it. We will just question it," he said.

Special session

Dr. Venecia said he would propose to President Macapagal-Arroyo and Drilon the calling of a special session of Congress next week in order to pass the proposed national budget, which has been held "hostage" by the impeachment debates.

But Drilon last night said he could not agree to Dr. Venecia's proposal that Congress hold a special session because he believed the session would be used not to tackle the proposed 2003 national budget.

Drilon said the session would be used by the House to transmit the impeachment complaint against Davide to the Upper House.

Open defiance

"If this happens, then there will be an open defiance of the status quo order of the Supreme Court," Drilon said in a statement.

"I cannot participate in that process. Neither should the Presidency."

At a news conference, Drilon said should Mr. Macapagal call a special session, he would bring the matter to senators for a caucus.

While people have serious reservations about the status quo order of the high court, "in the highest interest of the nation, we should enhance all the legal remedies and processes available before the high tribunal," the Senate President said.

Drilon said he was joining Mr. Macapagal in appealing to the House to have the high court order Gonzalez and the House should have abided by the status quo order of the Supreme Court in order to avert a constitutional crisis. He said the House could not defy the order of the highest court of the land on constitutional matters because the Supreme Court is the final arbiter in that area.

"We have to abide by that, otherwise we will collide with the Supreme Court. That is the real constitutional crisis if the House will not obey the order of the high court," Gonzalez said. But he said he would abide by any decision of the House on the matter.

Opponents to old views

Dr. Venecia said it was agreed that the one-third requirement for members to sign for the substantive transmittal of the complaint to the Senate had been met. As a result, he said, there was no need to subject the motion to reconsideration.

The transmittal will require plenary action, according to the Speaker. That means that there will be a motion to transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate when the session resumes on Nov. 18. Opponents will be allowed to argue against it so that their views will be recorded, Dr. Venecia said.

Rep. Herminio Aloha of Batanes and Rep. Benigno "Bitoy" Aquino III of Tarlac said they acceded to the transmittal of the complaint because they would be allowed to express their views against it once a motion is filed on the floor.

'Dual citizen'

Rep. Jaime Paras, whom Dr. Venecia fielded as a "dual citizen" for speaking in behalf of the Nacionalist People's Coalition while being a member of Lakas, said Dr. Venecia was able to arrive at a

'Take sides,' Bernas tells youth

By Marvin S. Rivera

FR. Joaquin Bernas, S.J., one of seven law experts appointed as amici curiae by the Supreme Court, yesterday called on the public, especially the youth, to "take sides" in the controversy involving Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Bernas, dean of the Ateneo Law School, said the multi-faceted conflict involving the Chief Justice and Congress was more a political conflict than constitutional issue.

"Impeachment is essentially a political process... [And] because this is a political process, **the people have every right to get involved**, take sides," Bernas told students during a program sponsored by Senate President Gregorio Aquino at the Church of the Gesu inside the Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City.

He said that while there seems no longer wandering any other option "because we've gotta have a full settlement" which was the essence of the complaint.

At least three congressmen-lawyers were asked to prepare the legal arguments for the hearing of the Supreme Court on Nov. 5. They were Gilbert Teodoro of Tarlac, Romeo Sapico of Iloilo and Clarel Marcoleta of Cebu.

Three private lawyers will represent the House in the Supreme Court hearing questioning the status quo order and its jurisdiction over the case. One of those being mentioned was Maria Evangelista. *With reports from Jhamaica Magallanes, Phil Pinpin and Paras*

Davide son defended

By Philip C. Tubeza

DRAMA on...

The spokesperson of the Supreme Court yesterday dismissed former Sen. Rene Saguisag's suggestion that Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. should accept resignation and become Ambassador to Africa to diffuse the current controversial crisis due to Davide's impeachment.

"I have not read Senator Saguisag's comments but I think he made it impact in church," said Supreme Court Associate Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, the head of the SC Public Information Office.

Khan also defended the membership of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.'s son Joseph Bryan Kilayko in Davide, in-coming SC nominees, including the bid to award contracts for the Supreme Court's modernization program.

Khan said Davide's son is a member of the SC bidding panel.

Khan said Bryan is a member of three committees because he is the Chief Justice's chief of staff.

"He is occupying a highly confidential position, which is allowed under civil service rules," Khan said.

Davide's critics have accused Bryan of forcing similar influence in the JBAC and the working group of the committees on the Judicial Justice, where irregularities have allegedly happened.

But Khan and Assistant Court Administrator Antonio Conejos, the BAC head, both denied that there were anomalies or that Bryan was using his relationship with his father to have a particular bidder.

"We does not have the influence attributed to him. He is a law-abiding person with a simple lifestyle," Khan said.

GMA acts to defuse ...

lester" would not solve the problem, Mr. Macapagal said. "Let us reach forth for this solution with our Home or constitution, through principled consensus and with dignity for all concerned."

Nearly 90 House members, mostly supporters of controversial Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella, Deputy Speaker Raul Daza and Majority Leader Prospero Nograles Jr., have signed the impeachment complaint alleging that Davide misappropriated money from Judiciary Development Fund that was treated, of for allowances to judges and court personnel to buy luxury cars and build and repair vacation houses for justices.

The Supreme Court, acting on separate petitions filed by private lawyers questioning the legality of the impeachment move, ordered the House and the Senate to "maintain the status quo" by not acting further on the complaint. Davide did not participate in the court's deliberations.

Even so, the controversy has spooked financial markets, which is still recovering from a failed military coup attempt in July. The peso plunged to a record closing low of 55.30 to the US dollar on Monday but has improved a bit the past two days.

Give-and-take

Hedreserving on his Macapagal's compromise formula, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said there should be give-and-take by both sides.

Bunye said there would be no resolution of the dispute if both parties insisted on the legal principles of final autonomy and impeachment technicalities.

"One school of thought is to the effect that the final arbiter on any matter relating to law is the Supreme Court. Of course, the other party will also claim that Congress supreme by has oversight functions over the other branches of government," he said.

No end

"There will be no end to the discussions and the President is precisely hoping that there will be some sort of agreement, what she is referring to as covenant, and that covenant would take into consideration maybe not only legislation but the national interest," he said.

Malacañang is also worried that a prolonged impasse on the Davide impeachment case could delay the approval of next year's budget and will visit no relation needed to boost government revenue.

Cooling-off period

Bunye said that while the adjournment of Congress until Nov. 18 provided a cooling-off period for the parties involved, the changes in Congress' schedule would push back the processing of other vital legislative measures.

"It will have a domino effect on the pending bills in Congress especially the budget. But we're still optimistic that the issue would be resolved soon and the lawmakers would go back and focus on their work," he said.

In her statement, however, Ms Macapagal expressed hope that the economy would be resilient enough to weather the latest political crisis.

"The democratic system has a tendency to be rocked by controversy but it has shown the capacity for bouncing back and moving forward," she said. "That is the same reaction our economy that has been beset by imminent doubts but has shown strong, consistent resiliency. There is confidence in our stability, investments continue prior to."

Top Quality Products

Polypropylene random pipes and fittings
For hot and cold water piping. Sizes 20mm up to 400mm O.D. - PP.
Aquagreen
- Resistance to chemicals
- Minimum pressure loss
- Resistant to corrosion
- Low thermal conductivity

The super thermal reflective aluminum foil.
SUNWAY
- Used for insulating roofs, walls and floors of residential, industrial or commercial buildings and for insulation of air conditioning duct.
- Increases energy efficiency of building by reducing HEAT transmission in radiation heat.
- Reduces internal condensation more comfortable.
- Saves cooling cost.

Laundry Room Tubs & Cabinets

Airconditioner Adjustable Brackets
For Outdoor Aircon Condensing Unit

DEXTERTON CORPORATION
Sales Agents: 147 Sgt. E. Rivera St., Mauo Station, Olongapo Gapanzan City
Tel. 047-611 / 341-4034 Fax No. 047-4034
E-mail: dexterton@yahoo.com www.dexterton.com

Fax reply coupon to: 528-02-34 or mail to:
Philippine Daily Inquirer
c/o Circulation Division
Ground Floor, Trinity Building
138 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila
I'd like to subscribe to the Philippine Daily Inquirer.
Please have my copy delivered to:
Name _____
Address _____
_____ Tel. No. _____
Signature _____

Now, Erap wants to go to US for knee surgery

By Arnaud M. Nocum

ESTRADA

THE PERSONAL physician of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada has raised anew the possibility of the ousted leader being allowed to leave for the United States to have his arthritic knees operated on by an American doctor.

In a telephone interview, Dr. Lazaro Herrera said an operation abroad has become necessary after a series of medical tests at the Makati Medical Center and at the Asian Hospital and Medical Center in Alabang showed that Estrada's problematic knee has given rise to more health problems.

Herrera claimed a recently discovered "multiple slipped disc" condition could result in Estrada's becoming paralyzed in one or both legs.

"What we are worried about are his knees. If they are not operated on, his health problems will worsen because he can barely walk," Herrera said.

"His inability to walk freely is aggravating problems in his body," he said.

Herrera said that he and the orthopedic surgeons that have been attending to Estrada since Monday are recommending an immediate operation.

He said he hoped that such a "serious health condition" would now convince the court to allow Estrada to leave.

Estrada last year requested that he be allowed to leave for the US to be operated on by the surgeon of his choice, Dr. Christopher Bono, at the Stanford Medical Center in California.

But the Sandiganbayan special division hearing the plunder and graft charges against him rumbled down the request, saying Estrada has not yet undergone a flight-risk test.

Herrera said there was now a pressing need for the anti-graft court to allow the operation claiming that Estrada's health was deteriorating.

"The slipped disc problem has caused some of the nerves in his spinal chord to be stuck between the bones, a condition that can result in his becoming paralyzed in one or both legs," Herrera explained.

Herrera and the other doctors also claimed to have found a mass/ligament in Estrada's left knee and that both knees have undergone "degenerative changes."

He said a final X-ray would be done today after which the doctors would make a comprehensive medical report on Estrada's condition and recommend total knee replacement surgery.

Although he admitted that this kind of operation is now being done here, Herrera said he had to respect the "choice of my patient" concerning the level of confidence he has in the doctor who will perform the surgery.

He said he and the other doctors are less worried about the multiple slipped disc problem which does not seem to need immediate surgery and can be treated with medicine and therapy.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, October 28, 2004
30th Week in Ordinary Time

Lectionary: Rom 8:31-39
Gospel: Lk 13:31-35

At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and gave him this warning, "Leave this place and go on your way, for Herod wants to kill you." Jesus said to them, "Go and give that fox my answer: 'Listen! I cast out demons and heal today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my course.' Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should be killed outside Jerusalem.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets and stone your messengers! How often have I tried to bring together your children, as a bird gathers her young under her wings, but you refused! Even now are you cold as ice left with your temple and you will no longer see me until the time when you will say 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Commentary:

"The old saying is the same now but gave him up for us all, how will he not give us all things with him?" This text reminds me of how Abraham tested the faith of Abraham and how Jesus was spared from death unlike God not sparing his son Abraham was. But in the case of God who Father his son Jesus was not spared from death. He allowed Jesus to die on the cross, and somehow the death of the Son was an opportune affirmation of the faith of the Father in Jesus. Emmanuel, a God without, is to us infinitely and our human condition. Let whether illness or human is about the impurity begins up what is most dear and precious to us.

(Servant Publications Inc., P. Miguel St., 109 Sgt. Esguerra Ave., Quezon City, 1103 Tel. 372-2278, Fax 372-2279, 372-2280, Quezon City, Tel. 921-1644, Fax 921-7429, Cebu Tel. 231-1741, Fax 231-1742, Davao Tel. 224-1741, Fax 224-1742, Cagayan de Oro Tel. 858-1741, Fax 858-1742, Iloilo Tel. 320-1741, Fax 320-1742, Baguio Tel. 442-1741, Fax 442-1742, Tacloban Tel. 321-1741, Fax 321-1742, Zamboanga Tel. 991-1741, Fax 991-1742, Butuan Tel. 342-1741, Fax 342-1742, Koronadal Tel. 228-1741, Fax 228-1742, Iligan Tel. 221-1741, Fax 221-1742, Cotabato Tel. 553-1741, Fax 553-1742, Tagbilaran Tel. 411-1741, Fax 411-1742, Naga Tel. 473-1741, Fax 473-1742, Legazpi Tel. 480-1741, Fax 480-1742, Puerto Princesa Tel. 433-1741, Fax 433-1742, Kalibo Tel. 268-1741, Fax 268-1742, Dumaguete Tel. 422-1741, Fax 422-1742, Tuguegarao Tel. 844-1741, Fax 844-1742, Laoag Tel. 772-1741, Fax 772-1742, Marawi Tel. 063-1741, Fax 063-1742, Jolo Tel. 591-1741, Fax 591-1742, Tandag Tel. 211-1741, Fax 211-1742, Surigao Tel. 826-1741, Fax 826-1742, Dipolog Tel. 758-1741, Fax 758-1742, Pagadian Tel. 215-1741, Fax 215-1742, Malaybalay Tel. 221-1741, Fax 221-1742, Ozamiz Tel. 521-1741, Fax 521-1742, Gingoog Tel. 760-1741, Fax 760-1742, Cagayan de Oro Tel. 858-1741, Fax 858

High court is final arbiter, lawmakers warned

Front page A1

He said lobbies could be fined P50,000 or face imprisonment of six months.

"Whether (the rabbit) is cooperative or not, it should be followed," Montebon said.

Guevara said congressmen should not blame Davide or the tribunal for the supposedly prevailing "counter-rational order" because they were the ones who started it all.

Montebon, Guevara and Inquirer columnist Will Fernandez will definitely proceed, he said.

"We are determined to push through with the impeachment proceedings, but we are not averse to the idea of a constitutional crowdsolution," Jaraula said.

Bully

Asked to elaborate, he said it could begin with the simple cognizance of the "oversight powers" of Congress and the Visiting Committee (VC) of the Supreme Court.

Jaraula said they would not abide with the high court's status quo order.

"It will be the height of stupidity if (Belo) is bully and then we, the lady bully, (is) lawyers (in) press and judge us," he said.

When asked whether congressmen were willing to plunge the country into chaos just because Davide had "provoked" them, in reality said the Chief Justice had raised their patience.

"He waited for one year for the Chief Justice to open the books for the Judicial Development Fund), but he never did. Instead, he sent us saying we don't have jurisdiction over (the JDF)," the lawmaker said.

Why the rush?

But at the same forum, PBA president Joy Cruzco said his group stressed Davide's impeachment is unconstitutional.

"We recognize the powers of Congress to initiate impeachment. It should always have that power but it should be within (the bounds of the Constitution. Why rush and violate the Constitution?" he said.

Cruz said there was no need to "interpret" the law on impeachment because "it's OK" and "is settled" under the same. Therefore, he said, the second impeachment complaint against Davide violated the one-year prescription period set by law.

"This is the opinion of the PBA," he said, adding that this was also what the framers of the 1987 Constitution had in mind.

The SC has no impeachment, an article the Philippines found its own laws, also says the same, he said.

Favoring Davide

Montebon, a member of the 1986 Constitutional Commission (Con-Com), said even its records showed that the framers of the 1987 Charter considered an impeachment complaint to be initiated once a verified complaint was filed.

"The records clearly show (that [the law] favors Chief Justice Davide," Montebon said.

Jaraula, Davide, also a Con-Com member, was one of those who took part in the deliberations on the constitutional provisions on impeachment. Another is retired Supreme Court Justice Florenz Regalado, who will also appear as amicus curiae or friend.

"The records of the deliberations of the (Con-Com) clearly show that an impeachment proceeding is considered initiated at the time of the filing of a verified impeachment complaint," Montebon said, adding:

"That, once such a complaint is filed, regardless of the outcome before the House committee on justice to which the complaint is referred, and regardless of the action taken by the House itself, sifting of a second complaint against the same official within a period of one year is in violation of (Constitution)."

Why only Davide?

Montebon said his fellows may, on certain former Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., why only Davide was targeted by the entire Supreme Court.

Why then is Davide being singled out? they said.

"The rudeness in our pronunciation shows that all decisions were said unanimously, particularly the ones specifically mentioned in the impeachment complaint, were supported and by Chief Justice Davide alone, which is what [the complaint] would have us believe, but by the Supreme Court en banc, that is, a session of the full membership of the Supreme Court," he bangs and his statements.

Jaraula, a supporter of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, and Montebon, an ally of Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago, are Arroyo's party-mates in the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD

Lea-Robert wedding guests told to 'bring dancing shoes'

By Leah C. Salterio
Contributor

WEDDING Lea Salonga flew out of Manila last Sunday night to return to Los Angeles, she made sure she had already distributed her wedding invitations to guests from Manila.

It's only two and a half months to go before her Jan. 18 altar date with Robert Chien, but Asian American hearts beat fast.

"All the big stuff in the wedding has been pretty taken care of," Lea said. "We already have the reception venue, the wedding bands and the gowns of the bridal entourage. So we are now attending to the small details."

The invite, in the elegant cranberry red wedding motif, was designed and made by Lilit and Black, a boutique in L.A. which specializes in custom-designed wedding invitations. The invite doesn't carry the list of principal sponsors. It simply says the date and time of the wedding, with a footnote: "Merry-making to follow. Bring your dancing shoes."

Invitations have been sent out to 350 people from different parts of the world, most of them in Lea. A small card inserted in the invite's left flap says the extent is a choice if not from or their region, and requests the guests to give their choice when they call to confirm their attendance before Dec. 16.

For regrets, a card in the right flap carries the name of the correct person in Manila—RJ Francisco, the girlfriend of Lea's younger brother Gerard.

RJ, a violinist with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO), is also one of the bridesmaids.

Lea left last Sunday with her mom, Lupeta Salonga, who will help her attend to the final preparations for the wedding. Lea is also getting help from her New York friends—Verve Lobo and Yvette Fernandez, who is also the maid of honor.

Lea said she wants a cozy intimate and simple wedding ceremony, "not just Filipino but very Asian," with traditional and non-traditional elements.

Lea and Robert will exchange marriage vows on Jan. 18, 2003 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in L.A. Lea will wear a gown by California-based designer Monique Chuillet, who has created gowns for American stars such as Jennifer Lopez, Sharon Stone, Angelina Jolie, Jane Jackson, Meg Ryan, Halle Berry and Marcia Cross.

Lea's wedding gown will be "simple, off white, with a ball gown skirt." The bridal entourage will wear gowns by Lydia Velasco, while Lea's mom will wear a Rajo Laurel. All the gowns will have a lining because of the very cold winter chill in L.A. in January.

The members of the men in the entourage will have Chinese collars, Lea added.

Lea and Robert met in L.A. in November 2001, while she was doing "Flower Drum Song" at the Mark Taper Forum, right beside the L.A. Cathedral.

They were introduced to each other by Robert's cousin, Christine Yuacango, who was part of the ensemble in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical.

Robert is an executive at Hewlett, a provider of high-tech customer contact services.

The wedding will be aired as a TV special on ABS-CBN two weeks after the actual date, and will include a feature on the day Robert proposed to Lea, as well as the bridal shower and the stag party in Las Vegas.

The couple's friends and family members will be interviewed for the TV special, to be directed by Bobby Garcia.

The wedding giveaway to Lea's 12 second-ring of "Pure Words," an original composition especially written for the wedding, with lyrics by Freddie Santos and music by Louie Gonzalez. Lea sang it in her "Songs from Home" concert at the PICC last September.

The CD giveaway is by Ivory (MR) Records Philippines, Lea's long-time record label.

Sunflowers on Boracay

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Ann Carvajal

IT'S almost the fifth day since my mom went ahead to her appointment with God. In the sentimental it's called "Nothing Gold Stays" (loosely translated, that means "an end to grieving").

But to those ever really an end to grieving the loss of someone who brought you into this world? It comes from like I have no business to ever say longer now that the source of my flesh and blood and the source of my heart and soul is gone. But as I look at my brother Ricky, sister Chita, my kids, nephews and nieces, I suddenly realize that my mom still wants me to carry on for their sake. Knowing her, she will be holding the reins from Heaven. I'm always in the direction my steps to look after our loved.

That's exactly how I felt when we took a much-needed breather in Boracay. Up to the last minutes there were still so many loose ends to tie up, so many things to do, and a sense of panicking. I could not help but smile because it reminded me of how my mom would always come through for all of us at the 11th hour. And our personal trip was no exception. By divine intervention and mom's intercession, everything just fell into place.

As I was boarding the plane, my mind went into flashback mode. I remembered the countless times I travelled with my mom and how she—at 81 years young—would insist it to be easier my load so that the heavy habit of showing up late. Not that she wanted to make a 40-minute entrance. She just was "my Trust Hands on Me," "You Give Love a Bad Name," "Spell of Roses," "Everything," "Born to Be My Baby," "Keep the Faith," "I'll Be There for You" and "Always."

But Jovi will be filming their video in a lifetime performances of these tracks at two shows next month in Orlando City.

Those performances will be released on DVD by next year.

For feedback, e-mail at dmail_at_dapare@yahoo.com or dollywood@starfishband.com

Bon Jovi's greatest hits, acoustic style

UNIVERSAL Music Philippines is set to release Bon Jovi's newest album, "This Left Feels Right."

The CD is a collection of Bon Jovi's greatest hits, all entirely re-crafted.

Each song was deconstructed, stripped down to its core elements and rebuilt into an entirely new acoustic version.

Among the tracks are "Wanted Dead or Alive," "Livin' on a Prayer," "Bad Medicine," "It's My Life," "Keep the Faith," "Always" and "Bed of Roses."

Unusual circus acts on 'Extreme Variety'

With some months now, we have occasionally been viewing a variety show on Skycable Channel 24 (ABN Asian TV) that has impressed us with its imaginative acts and good performances. Last Saturday night, we finally decided to improve on the happenstance nature of our patronage of the show, and focus more closely on its obviously exceptional merits.

Here's the breakdown.

The program is titled "Extreme Variety" and is telecast every Saturday at 9 p.m. on ABN. It's a grab-bag of the best variety acts onstage, culled from the showrooms of clubs, casinos, theaters and circuses all over the world.

"Extreme Variety" lives up to its title, because the performers it features have a penchant for pushing the envelope when it comes to daring, dexterity, wit and imagination.

Last Saturday, for instance, the program featured a juggler who worked, not with the usual balls or clubs, but with boomerangs (he could have been injured really badly if he'd made a slip, but was so good at juggling that he remained unscathed.

We've all heard of performing dogs, but last Saturday's telecast of "Extreme Variety" published a report on what is a first-time for performing cats! That was a tough act to pull off, because cats generally have a mind of their own, but the trainer's master was able to convince his frisky felines to obey his instructions in the latest, and perform circus acrobatics with utter discipline.

Not that the performing dogs were left out in the cold and standing in line for unemployment benefits. One canine was given several spot features who amazed fans running around—as just his front legs!

Other animal acts:

A man thumping merrily away on a light bulb. He confided that, in the course of his unusual career, he'd eaten some 2,000 bulbs, and wryly added that perhaps it was time for him to get a real job!

A man who also carves as an apple. Pretty conventional, right? Not him, however, because he carves who else but an apple chief on his own head! Now, that takes both expert marksmanship and patience.

In another act, this modern day William Tell shot five arrows at a black sheet of cloth. It turned out that, behind that cloth was a woman, (since he was shooting at her apple unseen, he could have injured her if his aim wasn't as good as it is).

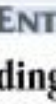
Three beautifully muscled acrobats going fluidly from one "impossible" pose to another, all the while lifting each other in slow motion, flowing the lines of gravity as every turn. There act was visually elegant and artistic, as they formed human pieces of "sculpture" with their bodies.

A singer who sprinted his own musical performance with his comically preposterous voice, which was going every which way as he sang.

"Twist" acrobats from Asia who went into all sorts of heavily coordinated contortions with the help of some metal barrels.

A woman doing a hula hoop dance—with the hoops ablaze.

As the night performances did their acts, the viewers at my home were heard to say, "How'd they do that?" Figure it out for yourself when you catch "Extreme Variety" next time around.



VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

It's a grab-bag of the best variety acts onstage

MOVIE GUIDE
MANILA
QUEZON CITY
MOVIES MALLS - NCR/NEARBY CINEMAS
MANDALUYONG CITY
GREENHILLS AREA
LOBBIES
POWER PLANT CINEMAS
Rockwell Center, Makati City
THE ARMENIAN DEAD
LIFE FOR SALE
THE SPY WHO LOVED ME
MY FIRST ESSENCE
MY MOM'S DAUGHTER
IDENTITY
NOW SHOWING
Special Halloween Presentation!
A SMART, SCARY THRILLER
What if every choice we make was already decided for us? What if there really were no coincidences in life and our destinies were already predetermined?
From the producer of the SCREAM movies, comes IDENTITY, a smart, taut, nerve-jangling thriller with a fascinating twist.
Ten strangers will unwittingly are brought together in a motel in a rainstorm. A lone driver (John Cusack), an '80s TV star (Rebecca DeMornay), a cop (Ray Liotta) who is transporting a killer (John Hawkes), a call girl (Amanda Peet), a pair of newlyweds and a family in crisis. All are stranded in a desolate motel run by a nervous night manager.
Amidst the flashing shutter to quickly replaced with some chilling hour as the 10 murders die, one by one. They soon realize that if they are to survive, they'll have to uncover the secret that has brought them all together.
IDENTITY
NOW SHOWING
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7
ARANETA COLISEUM
DISNEY'S 101 DALMATIANS
BUY YOUR TICKETS EARLY TO GET THE BEST SEATS!
Call TicketNet at 911-5555

Malate 'Black Nights'

COMMUNITY Guide to Malate presents "Black Nights," a Halloween dance party, tonight and tomorrow.

DJ Sergio Dorado, a.k.a. Soul Shaker, and DJ Gilbert Tamesis will host the Halloween party with urban music.

Clubber's Guide also has a drink all-you-can promo from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. on only P100.

Clubber's Guide is at 630 Jules Nadeau St., Malate. For reservations, call 490-1981.

The WORLD

Edited by Lourene G. Guerra

Foreign fighters smuggling in suicide bombers into Iraq

BAGHDAD—A core group of foreign fighters in Iraq are smuggling in suicide bombers from Saudi Arabia to carry out attacks like Monday's five bombings in Baghdad, according to senior coalition military and intelligence sources.

About 200-400 foreign fighters are currently estimated to be in Iraq, but they serve mainly as a hardcore rebirth option, financier and undertaken logistics for the tribal operations, a senior military officer said.

The allegations came as US President George W. Bush frequently blackballed Hussein's followers and "foreign terrorists" in Monday's five suicide bombings in Baghdad, which killed 43 people and wounded at least 200 more.

When it comes to the actual suicides, the planner are recruiting their car bombers from hotheaded, uneducated gunmen opposed fire on the disembarked soldiers, the spokesperson said an exhibition of assassinity.

About 1,600 Ukrainians are serving in the Polish-led stabilization force patrolling central and southern Iraq.

In Baghdad, Saddam's former security chief Sabawi Ibrahim al-Hassan, who is in US custody, was transferred to a hospital in the capital after he suffered a heart attack, Iraqi officials said.

It was believed to be the first 80. Aliens main battle tank destroyed since the end of major combat May 1. During the active combat phase, several of the 68-ton vehicles—the mainstay of the US Army's armored forces—were disabled to combat.

The latest attacks, including a nighttime morning barrage in daylight, followed a day of violence in which insurgents targeted Americans Iraqis and Iraqis who work with the occupation authorities. US officials also announced that Baghdad's Deputy Mayor Sefa Abdul Razzaq al-Sultani was killed Sunday in a drive-by shooting.

The confirmation of attacks on Iraqis allied with the occupation broke off the attempts by the US-led authorities to persuade more Iraqis to join in administering the country and play a greater role in protecting security. Businesses from Iraq to join administering the country and play a greater role in protecting security. Businesses from Iraq to join administering the country and play a greater role in protecting security. Businesses from Iraq to join

Global e-mails enough to fill 500,000 Libraries of Congress

SAN JOSE—All those e-mails, junk or otherwise—are adding up.

In 2002, people around the globe created enough new information to fill 500,000 US Libraries of Congress, according to a study by faculty and students at the University of California at Berkeley.

The 5 billion gigabytes of new data works out to about 800 megabytes per person—the equivalent of a stack of books 9 metres high, the study by the university's School of Information Management and Systems found.

That's a 30-percent increase in stored information from 1999, the last time the global study was conducted.

The information area with the biggest percentage increase in data was, unsurprisingly, hard-disk drives. The study found the amount of stored information on these increasingly high-capacity storage media rose by up to 114 percent from the previous study in 1999.

The study also put to rest any lingering myths about the paperless office. The amount of information stored on paper, including books, journals and office documents, increased up to 43 percent in 2002 compared to 1999.

"We thought in our (last) study that film and paper would head toward digital formats," UC Berkeley Prof. Peter Lyman said.

With paper, that has not been the case, as people access documents on their computer, but then print them out, he said.

But photography is fulfilling that initial expectations.

"Individual photographs are really moving quickly to digital cameras, or even image-producing telephones," Lyman said. That helped non-silicon to a decline of approximately 10 percent in film-based photographs in 2002 compared with 1999, and fueled the growth of magnetic storage. Reuters

WANTED IMMEDIATELY!!!
U.S.-TRAINED
ANESTHESIOLOGISTS
TO WORK WITH A GROUP IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, USA.
MAY SPONSOR WORKING VISA.

SEND CV/RESUMES ASAP TO:
LEIBI LUCK C. PENA, M.D. or NRAD, M.D.
608 C.M. SUMO , BAGUIO CITY, 2600
email: lcpena@yahoo.com.au
or YMRADIA@PARTYLINE.NET

Hear Now, Pay Later!
At Sounton™, you can be sure that we will take care of all your hearing care needs. Call our professional and friendly staff for a no obligation FREE HEARING TEST.
We will answer any question you may have about hearing loss and what you can do about it. See and hear the latest in Siemens hearing aids.
And here's the best part: you can start using your new hearing system and pay for it in installments!
Ask about our convenient price guarantee!
Call us today!
Medical Plaza Makati: 867-1918
Robinsons Ortigas: 635-9033
SOUNton

Have an early visit from Santa.
Get up to 50% off on your favorite cellphone brands.
Hit the holiday scene early. Treat yourself to a BIRD, Motorola, Nokia, Samsung, Siemens or Sony Ericsson cellphone.
Enjoy discounts of up to 50%.*
Parts are all original. As a pre-holiday bonus, we're also throwing in a one-year warranty on parts and labor.
Get moving. Promo good from October 28 to 31, 2003 only.
See us at the Cellular Head Office at the 3/F SM Plaza Eastwood Libis, Q.C. from 11am to 4pm
or call 421-1000 loc. 601 for details ASAP.
You also have the chance to win a Nokia 2100. Sold yours or cellphone accessories when you avail of the discount.
BIRD
*Applicable to selected models only.

FIVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS
SuperBrands Hall of Fame
SUPER BRAND
SuperBrands Survey 1999
SuperBrands Survey 2000
SuperBrands Survey 2001
SuperBrands Survey 2002
SuperBrands Survey 2003
PILOT
Experience the Ultimate writing instrument
V5&V7 Hi-Tecpoint
PILOT Hi-Tecpoint V5
BX-V5
BX-V7
COSMOS BAZAR, INC.
PILOT CORPORATION

A RESCUER crosslanes strolls toward the entrance of the coal mine in Russian mine where rescue teams later brought in the workers after almost two of 13 trapped miners. AP/WW

Rescuers find alive majority of 13 trapped Russian miners

NOVOSIBIRSK, Russia — Rescue workers found alive a majority of 13 miners who had been trapped deep underground for six days. One of the miners died, one was missing and 11 others survived, officials of the regional mining headquarters said.

Meanwhile, in the Russian Far East, an explosion in a mine in the Primorye region, claimed five lives. Another 46 miners were trapped after an explosion in the "Tumanovskaya mine" in the town of Partizansk, Vitaly Bilkov, a spokesperson for the Russian emergency ministry said.

At the mine in southern Russia, the first survivors and Wednesday morning, when drillers managed to break through to the surface where the miners had sought refuge, the officials said. The miners were to be brought up to the surface later Wednesday.

Rescuers had tunneled through cold rock from an adjacent mine to reach the miners, who had been stranded by an water. Engineers officials had worked to drag the hole through which when had flowed into the shaft. Hundreds of tons of rock, soil and reinforced concrete poles had been dumped into the shaft to seal the leak.

Emergency workers on Tuesday had stopped the flow of water into a flooded mine in southern Russia, officials said, as drillers came within meters of the miners presumed location.

Rescuers tunneled through cold rock from an adjacent mine to reach the miners. By Tuesday morning, the tunnelers were two or three meters away from the area where the men are believed to have been stranded by the flood of ice water, said Ilia Gavrilov, Kuzbass chief of Russia's emergency situations ministry.

Andrei Khudyakov, leader of rescuers at the Zapadnaya mine in Novokuznetsk, said his team had plunged the last few enough which water had flowed into the shaft. Hundreds of tons of rock, soil and reinforced concrete poles had been dumped into the shaft to seal the leak, the Itar-Tass news agency reported.

"Maybe we'll punch through and find them standing there, alive," Khudyakov told reporters.

"We see miners were working in shifts, emerging from the mine with blackened faces and exhausted-looking eyes. They have remained there through about 60 meters in four days, compared with the month each each usually requires, Russian news agencies reported.

The miners were working some 800 meters below ground late Thursday when water burst from a subterranean lake behind into a shaft above them, blocking their way to the surface. On Saturday, 23 other miners who had been trapped by the flood were rescued.

Lyuba Rudenchenko, husband forget had been with the 33 for that he got separated. She sat in the mine company headquarters on Tuesday, her eyes red-rimmed from crying, waiting for news.

"He, we all is despair," she said. "But I hope he is alive and didn't go his from the place where he got lost. I really hope everything will be fine."

Alexander Kosinchenko, deputy chair of the Russian mine rescue authority, said Monday that rescue officials believed the miners had found a dry place to stay, and that temperatures in the mine were 24 degrees Celsius. He said, however, that evaporation in the mine could expose chest to cold.

"So long as they have enjoyers and water, they have a chance to survive," he said.

There were 71 miners working in the mine in the Beaver via Dies region, about 1,000 km south of Moscow, when the accident occurred. Twenty-five miners managed to escape to other pits and reach the surface after several shafts were flooded.

It was the second such accident at the Zapadnaya mine this year. It said water flooded the mine in February, but there were no people inside at the time.

Accidents are common in the Russian coalindustry and miners wage frequent protests over wage delays and declining safety standards, according to the Independent Coal Miners' Union, of miners were killed in the job last year and 99 in 2000. AP

Ex-paramilitary fighters free 4 journalists

LA LIBERTAD, Guatemala — Rebel paramilitary fighters released seven people, including four journalists, on Tuesday after the government promised to pay them for their services during Guatemala's 36-year civil war.

Carolina Sobis Lara, head of a government organization in charge of monitoring the country's peace process, said the government signed a document in which it promised to pay the former fighters.

Former members of the paramilitary Civilian Self-Defense Patrols formed by the government in 1982 to help it fight leftist guerrillas, attended the hostages' release.

Reuters cameraman Jorge Dan Lopez and photographer Bienvenido Diaz were arriving in La Libertad on Sunday to cover a planned demonstration when their vans were stopped. Two other journalists who came to report on the seizure, Mario Linares and Alberto Ramirez, also were captured.

"I feel very relieved because with these people (the former paramilitaries) we didn't know what would happen and I believed we were not going to get out of this," Diaz said.

The paramilitary groups were disbanded in 1996 as part of an agreement that ended the country's civil war and have been dismantling compensation ever since.

In July 2001, paramilitaries stopped a bus in the country to demand $1,500 a person for their services. The government agreed to pay compensation, but reduced the amount to $600 to be paid in three installments.

Gonzalo Menegazzo, director of Prensa Libre, said Linares had called him "and he told me: 'Here we are.'"

The rapporteur press union in Bolivia came despite a speech Monday night by Vice President Juan Hoyos who said, "We are not in a position to negotiate in the face of this type of insurance" by the paramilitaries.

In a radio interview before the release was announced, Linares said the journalists on had heard the captors to sleep outside and he said the number holding them had grown to about 3,000 from 300 fifty earlier. AP

Socialists map strategy to fight US domination

SAO PAULO, Brazil — Left-leaning politicians from around the world rendered Tuesday on a declaration against US-style "savage capitalism" and the spread of unfettered capitalism.

Speakers at the 22nd Socialist International Congress criticized a new world order where rich countries and corporations benefit while the planet's legions of poor only grow larger.

"There are deals that would never, never, ever, in our unjust world," said Swedish Deputy Prime Minister Margareta Winberg. "It is a world that lacks balance, it is a world where there is a lot of room for improvement. That is why we are here — to bring those things."

Delegates spent Tuesday fine-tuning a "Declaration of Sao Paulo" expected to be approved Wednesday, the last day of the three-day gathering of 600 delegates from 100 political parties from Europe, Asia, the Americas and Africa.

Many of the draft documents' points reflected ideas expressed for years by anti-globalization activists and for months by opponents of US military intervention in Iraq.

Although the draft did not cite the U.S. administration of President George W. Bush by name, it likened conservatives' trying "to undermine multilateral institutions, to promote unilateralism and the commercialism of the markets, and to impose the will of the powerful to decide the future of mankind."

And it reiterated the decades-old idea of forgiving debt owed by the planet's poorest countries, "subject to conditions of good governance."

Delegates acknowledged that much of the draft's points are not new, but said the declaration is important to help create left's political-to-guide their party's policies.

"This draft is a confirmation of all we have been doing in recent years," said Antonio Menegale, a leaders of Brazil's Socialist Party.

Antonio Galbraith, of Uruguay's center-left Frente Amplio party, said the document represented because it came on the heels of a mounting worldwide public opinion supporting basic opposition to the Socialist International.

The group "knows there is deciding, but now are pressing consciousness," he said. AP

10 YEARS OF "PLAYBOY"

"Playboy" publisher Hugh Hefner (center) celebrates his magazine's 10th anniversary at the Palms hotel in Las Vegas, one of the 10 American cities where the magazine is throwing a party this year.

New York safest US city, says mayor

NEW YORK— New York City's crime rate in 2003 took a knock on seen since the 1960s, mayor Michael Bloomberg said Tuesday, boasting that it was the safest city in the United States.

In 2002, the crime rate in New York sank 5 percent compared to the previous year, Bloomberg said in a joint statement along with Police Chief Raymond Kelly in which they published newly released FBI figures.

New York's overall crime rate of 3,108 per 100,000 population is 25 percent lower than the national rate of 4,119, the officials said.

"The safest big city in America keeps getting safer," Bloomberg claimed. "While the conventional wisdom said New York's crime rate would increase in a recession and Rudy cities, the police department proved a strong and elected once again why (we are the) finest in the world."

Homicides in 2003 fell 4.6 percent against the previous year—which was 2001, when some 3,061 were killed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"In 2002, homicides fell to their lowest level since 1963, when Mayor Robert F. Wagner was in City Hall and President John F. Kennedy was in the White House," Kelly said.

For 2003 "it again set a record to read the year as either the lowest or second lowest number in 40 years," he said.

Yet of this is being done at a time when the department has 4,000 fewer officers than just three years ago, and when we must now focus a renewed, dual aspect of its mission on counter-terrorism," he added. AFP

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Publisher Isabel Prieto
Editor in Chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc
Managing Editor Jose Ma. D. Hilario
Associate Editor Armando M. Doronila
News Editor Antonio T. Bernardo Jr. • Chief, News Desk Paul B. Pedro
Opinion Editor Juliet P. Arcilla
National Editor Francisco R. Tatad Jr.
City Editor Gaby Lim
Senior Desk Editor Rosario S. Garcellano
Editorial Consultant Antonio Dumlao
Chief Photographer Ismael U. Sarmiento
Art & Design Director Lucy S. Pujalte

Board Chairman Maria S. Prieto
President Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing Roberto R. Romulo
Senior Vice President for Corporate Services Raoul D. Virata
VP for Advertising Felipe M. Guevara
VP for Circulation Gemma P. Cuadrasal

All rights reserved. Copyright in all articles, cartoons and other contributions published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer is vested in the publishers and no part of any of the same may be reproduced or published in any manner or form without the written permission of the publishers.

Truce

THE DAVIDE impeachment express train was derailed last Tuesday when the House of Representatives and the Senate adjourned their session until Nov. 10, averting a head-on collision between the Supreme Court and Congress over the impeachment complaint.

In a deft parliamentary maneuver, the adjournment in effect stopped the complaint from being transmitted by the House, during the recess, to the Senate. This would have forced the Senate to treat the impeachment trial. In effect, the adjournment put a truce in place, and Congress remained in session.

This defective maneuver came during a day of dramatic developments in the escalating constitutional crisis provoked by the impeachment complaint, among which was the order of the Supreme Court calling on Congress to maintain the "status quo" and urging the parties "to refrain from transcending acts that would render the petitions moot." The Court issued the "status quo" resolution in response to six petitions questioning the constitutionality of the impeachment complaint and seeking the issuance of a temporary restraining order on the transmittal of the complaint to the Senate. It stopped short of issuing an order but resolved to strive to diplomatic words, apparently to avoid further inflaming passions in the House of Representatives.

Neither did the adjournment of the session nor the Court's resolution put an end to the escalating crisis. They merely broke the momentum of the impeachment fever over-heating and exploding into a full-blown crisis and provided a cooling-off period which might allow the production of successful initiatives to break the stand-off.

Now that this defusing mechanism has postponed a showdown between the two co-equal branches of government, it seems out of place and irresponsible for the members of Congress associated with hotheaded tycoon Eduardo M. Cojuangco's Nationalist People's Coalition to fuel tensions by issuing combative statements that they are not bound by the House adjournment and by the Court's resolution. They begged the question by resorting to finger-pointing, blaming the Court for provoking the crisis by undermining that the complaint was unconstitutional and accusing the Court of aggravating the crisis with this resolution.

On the basis of incontrovertible facts, the crisis was sparked by the rushing of the complaint in the House where NPC congressmen, with the aid of several administration Lakas stalwarts, cut corners, bypassing the House committee on justice. From their unreasonable assertions, we get the sense that the NPC and its allies are not at all interested in settling the controversy and are rather determined to have a showdown with the Supreme Court—a confrontation that is likely to plunge the country into its most dangerous constitutional crisis since World War II.

The Court still has to resolve the issues raised in the petitions seeking a TRO. It will still hear arguments by lawyers, at least during the congressional recess. While the truce is in place (with the leadership of both the House and the Senate indicating they would respect the status quo), a number of groups have begun to fish in troubled waters. Not least are the Magdalo officers who sprang the failed July 27 coup, who have praised the action of the impeachment serfers.

It would of course serve the interests of the officers if the constitutional system is plunged into a crisis. The Feliciano Commission, which inquired into the coup, has concluded that the Oakwood siege was spearheaded not by the officers' grievances but more by their desire for power. The commission's report found that the officers have no respect for the constitutional system; they have as little respect for it as the rabid of congressmen who provoked the crisis with their hastily and ruthlessly contrived impeachment complaint. The congressmen who sprang the complaint that has smacked the judicial system now find themselves in good company with the impetuous failed coup plotters.

The truce gives the nation a respite from crisis hysteria. It buys time during which cooler solutions might be evolved to break the stand-off. Hot heads promoting narrow business interests are better watered than should they succeed in breaking down the constitutional system, they too cannot escape the convulsions of an anarchy they are fueling.

Compromise excludes the public again

EDITORIAL

WHAT a miracle, in the hours of post-midnight to forge a compromise between the House of Representatives and the Supreme Court to ward off the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. that have plagued the people, owners of the money that is the root cause of the problem. Power to no one's ally.

Under the formula proposed by Speaker Jose de Venecia, the Supreme Court will acknowledge the "oversight powers" of the House over it and the House will acknowledge the "fiscal autonomy" of the Court. Then the impeachment complaint will be withdrawn and Davide can go back to the tribunal and everybody will be happy. The "honor" of both sides will be saved.

But what about the people who paid the bills for the courts that made up the Judiciary Development Fund? Don't they have a right to know how their money was spent? What happened to the people's right to information? What happened to "transparency"?

The congressmen who filed and signed the impeachment complaint are the first offenders. "I hope they had read the details of his purchases and understood it before they circled us," Rep. Gilbert Remulla said at De Kaplan in Manila. Rep. Constantino Jaraula said he learned "a related list, President Cory, and Raul Roco were the movers of the case — and understand the reasons why we filed this (impeachment) complaint." They said they have evidence to prove their overzealous colleagues said they did not want to sign it first but when they saw fewer signatures, they felt it was time to add their own.

But these impeachment lawmakers are keeping their cards very close to their chests. I asked them why they have not released these documents to the media and the public. Remulla and Jaraula said no, they would. But until now, nothing.

How can the media inform the public of the contents of the Articles of Impeachment and the evidence supporting them if the congressmen don't release copies of them? How will the public appreciate the merits of their cases?

According to the congressmen's verbal motivations, Davide was guilty of misfeasance, and probably graft and corruption, spending hundreds-thousands of pesos in excessive, luxurious, luxury vehicles and luxury cottages in Baguio for Supreme Court justices. They said 80 percent of the JDF is supposed to go to court employees in the form of cost-of-living allowances. The Supreme Court is supposed to use only 20 percent of the JDF for furniture and other expenses of the tribunal. But Davide and his son Reynaldo have already exceeded that 20% limit.

Rep. Justine Antonino-Garbonzo said the curtains purchased by the Court would be "more at home at Buckingham Palace than in Padre Rosa's," She said Davide authorized the use of P5.57 million for the curtains. That "buys a too-high-for-curtains window or a suite of palm silk," she said. "At P1.00 per meter of curtain material, the prevailing price in shopping malls, the P5.57 million could buy 10,700 meters of curtain cloth." That is almost 50 kilometers long. "One can hang that curtain along the whole length of the Ayala Superhighway."

Another P6.1 million has been approved for the purchase of "loose furniture," the lawmakers said. The chairs for justices allegedly cost P120,000 each. "You own a king throne that Ocampo," said Rep. Agapito Aguiar. The cost of a chair for one justice can already "build a house for the poor."

In contrast to this extravagance, judiciary employees were underpaid by as much as P500 million during the years 2000 to 2002, the impeachment complaint charged.

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

These verbal accusations have aroused the curiosity and outraged the public. Are they true? They want to see the evidence. But the congressmen are too secretive. What is the secret, your honors? Don't you trust your colleagues enough?

I am sure the Chief Justice can explain away these charges. But her refusal to explain except by a letter to Speaker De Venecia which the latter says refused to release to the public. By this effectively disenfranchised the people.

Is the proposed compromise for the House and Supreme Court to acknowledge each other's powers, claim hands and go home unburnished more sanely the public. They would be left in the dark again. Was our money misspent or not? Was the Judiciary Development Fund abused? Are there allowances or not? The people won't know.

Former Sen. Jose Puno Kalaw, president of the Philippine Constitutional Association, said a massive compromise would not dispel "the people's suspicions" fueled by the impeachment complaint. It will also be a "disservice" to Davide and to the judicial system if small special groups supporting him, including court judges, continue holding rampartly rallies or manifestoes, Kalaw added.

Should it not be better for all concerned, especially the public, if the impeachment committee would also look into the House members' pork barrels and expenses, and the Chief Justice admit them one by one? That way, there would be no leftist Davide would willfully able to defend herself. Even if the complaint is withdrawn, then the Chief Justice is not off the hook. She can explain the expenses to dispel of doubt would continue to hang over him. I think all concerned owe the people an explanation.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: What is the difference between a roadkill and the SPC congressmen who initiated the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide?

Answer: One is a lootcan-dwelling, a-eating road-sucker; the other one is a fish.

Hour of reckoning

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

DAVIDE retired before dawn about the need to uphold truth and justice even when the architect of a hallowed institution, were at it. That was what the famous Dreyfus case was all about. Alfred Dreyfus was the French captain who was accused of selling secrets to the enemy and jailed for life. It turned out he was innocent, according to evidence that came to light a couple of years later. The military brass even refused to budge, fearing that the idea it reserved to a kangaroo court could damage its image. Dreyfus, an innocent man, had to rot on jail to preserve its honor.

It was Emile Zola who stood against that injustice, prodding it with his famous essay, "J Accuse." His point, among other things, was that no institution that swerves on majesty does not deserve to honor; a dishonorable decision is one that continues a case does not preserve itself, it destroys itself.

I've invoked the same principle repeatedly, not least in the cases of Jose Ramirez and Teodoro Benigno. Both called for upholding an unjustly to save an institution. In Ramirez's case, GMA and Reynaldo Pelayo refused to acknowledge their mistakes even the presidency, whose honor they thought would be tarnished by the concession. In Benigno's case, his supporters demanded that the woman who charged him with rape be executed, lest she be the first case a would impugn the Church's integrity. Nothing could be further from the truth.

I'd be the first to invoke the same principle on Alfredo Benipe if the impeachment case against him by Randing Cojuangco's and his Wowowin's media in Congress had merit. The charge, "Save Davide, Save Democracy. Save the Country" would resonate only with people of a mental mooring it on the bones of tragedy. Democracy is not saved by defending unsaleable men, the country is not saved by ignoring wrongdoing, the Supreme Court is not saved by compromising injustice. If Davide has crimes to be voted ending, the only way the Supreme Court, democracy, and the country can be saved is by punishing him for it.

But nothing is further from the truth. I have

been privy to the impeachment complaint against Davide from the beginning. I've been privy to the evidence that supports it. I've been privy to the arguments that support it. I've been privy to the arguments that refute it. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations of the refutations. I've been privy to the arguments that refute the refutations of

Salonga: Davide 'democratized' JDF disbursements

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE ELEGANT adjournment of the House last Tues. day preceded the curious, a much-needed breathing spell, to cool down the bet passions stirred up by the hectic impeachment mess. Of course, the young SPC firebrands like Representatives Gilberto Teodoro and Mitzi Cajayon-Uy are upset that no impeachment rap, final del Mar questioned the operation of the Jose Rizal-Chiang Kai-shek, which also ain't impeachment, adjourned the session until Nov. 10. Bul. the group can hardly complain, as it was announced last Monday night that the session would commence at 2 p.m. the next day...and they were in the House by 10 a.m. to organize whatever there really was to organize, Gonzalez ordered a roll-call, which produced only 63 members.

* * *

This respite should enable the leading minds to come up with solutions to this grave crisis. Many offered plans in appeal to the voters of prerogatives of the legislature to be completed in subsequent chat sessions. This is still the best solution, as the Supreme Court's decision to dismiss the case for the House justice committee study various ways to check any abuses in the disbursements of the JDF, including amending or even repealing the law, which may require the Supreme Court to "take jurisdiction" of the Chief Justice.

* * *

I am condemned Davide's refusal to agree that the House impose its oversight functions on the JDF. This was created by PD 1869 and revised by PD 1993 as added funding to ensure the Supreme Court's fiscal autonomy is not appropriated by the House as part of the national budget. The Agency Specific Guidelines for the use of the JDF comes from executive order issued by the President to cover local and then, merely spending the money, four which amounts all appropriations such as those granted to the executive branch, but nothing to do with the JDF. He contended that while the House has "oversight functions" over all appropriations enacted by law such as those in the General Appropriations Act, the JDF merely spending, does not constitute this category. Gonzalez also cited the Congress to its constituents, to make Sec. 38 of art. VI of the Constitution, its records and accounts shall be open to the public in accordance with law, but these shall be audited only by the COA. Any law to open the Supreme Court's finances, Davide says many may as JDF gets total manner going is totally void.

* * *

When I saw the full-page ad published by the pro-impeachment bloc, my instinct was not to read the SPC's handiwork, especially since it glosses over its lions' misuse of the multi-billion peso cross levy funds. A closer reading of the ad by the group's legal counsel, however, is deeply disturbing to mind of the people into believing that Davide was corrupt. For instance, the ad says that P64,185,891.80 was spent on "renovation of the SC session hall in Manila" and in 18 months, the SPC alleged that over P6 million went into curtains, which, of course, is eye-popping. But it turns out that only P26 million, not P64 million, was spent for the renovation of the session hall, which also includes the en banc conference room, those of the three divisions and the lobby, and as the ad says, the extensive office renovations, the JDF merely spending, does not include the entire campus, including the Court of Appeals in its splendid premises, to make Sec. 38 of art. VI of the Constitution, its records and accounts shall be open to the public in accordance with law, but these shall be audited only by the COA. Any law to open the Supreme Court's finances, Davide says many may as JDF gets total manner going is totally void.

* * *

A lot is being made by Davide's accusers about his son Bryan's serving as vice chair of the bidding committee, but then either its not known or they chose to divulge that he was only one of 12 members, and above him were the chair, Antonio H. Bautista, the assistant court administrator appointed by former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, and the co-chair, Virginia Jose Ponferrada, the Supreme Court clerk of court. In fact, one reform Davide has introduced. As former Senate President Jovito Salonga pointed out in a press conference, he transformed the "sole authority" of the Chief Justice in the JDF into "an instrument of democracy." How? By appointing several committees to study, discuss and recommend to the entire Court the pertinent disbursement and expenditure of the JDF. As such, the Court making the final decision on loans, unlike his predecessor who chose to exercise the prerogative by himself. For instance, a committee on Halls of Justice was created by a justice and not some crony as was Justice Santiago Kapunan, who, Salonga stressed, says, on the basis of his voting record, "not only pro-Marcos and pro-Estrada but also pro-Bushing." Upon his retirement, he was replaced by Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez, an Estrada appointee and "a pro-Binding Committee." Salonga noted that all the disbursements and expenditures mentioned no longer the chief justice's personal decision but approved not just by Davide or by a regular quorum, but the whole court en banc.

'Balik-Sorsoganon'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

Tacloban, was on vat the ribbon during the blessing of Baloy Italian Palad; a one-stop center that shelter the women and children victims of violence.

Almost a year ago, Mayor Lee learned about the "one-stop shop" for women and children victims of abuse by the country's deputy mayor for Cebu and decided to community-based approaches in reproductive health. The "one-stop shop" approach makes it possible for survivors to get medical, psychological, legal and police support in one place, so that they will not have to run from one agency to another.

Finding the concept most attractive, she promised to set up such a structure in Sorsogon, and when re-elected went ahead to do so. Her husband, Rep. Salvador Escudero III, and children of Sorsogon lose that a year after assuming Escudero's study-tour.

The "Balay" or house is a sturdy three-story building, painted in predominant shades of light green and white, with counseling and interview rooms, a kitchen, dormitory and a meeting garden which can be used for gatherings and large affairs.

* * *

THAT afternoon, I was the main speaker at the women's conference, being held as part of the several activities for "Kasanggayahan 2003," Sorsogon province's annual festival.

With banderas women from Sorsogon City and neighboring towns attending, the conference was meant to lend a "political" note to the annual festivities which usually focus on cultural exhibits, beauty and talent contests, a trade fair and entertainment numbers.

Especially, most of the questions during the open forum centered on domestic violence, especially the frustration felt by caregivers who spent years of their lives caring for battered women, only to go back to the arms of violent victims of violence, only to watch incredulously as these same women freely entrusted their abusive husbands.

Indeed, I said, it is one of the most difficult aspects of working with women and children survivors of violence: for, until we as a society are better able to provide women with real choices and alternatives, and empower them to support themselves and their children, they will always be battered women without no choice but to return to their abusive husbands, risking a repeat, if not an escalation, of the cycle of violence, with perhaps tragic consequences. But, no matter how much we feel for the women, we must also respect their decisions and their reasons for them. To disregard or belittle them would be to deprive them of even their most basic right to dignity and respect.

* * *

MAYOR Lee had said she would try to organize a get-together with my relatives from the Bataan-Quezon-Zambales clan, which is quite a challenge. Quite unexpectedly, the hosts "couldn't resist" a blow for such a gathering. So on this Thanksgiving I went, from the Balay Baloy-Palad in the women's conference, from the basic Tacloban-Cebu-Manila airport to Sorsogon's third, which loomed over and managed by former Mayor Fernando Irene, brother of our beloved "Tita" Eggie Duran Aparral, people were coming up to me and introducing themselves as my relatives. Among them were Mrs. Tita Cecilia, Tito Fernando's wife, even managed to recruit me to help with the publicity for "Balik Sorsogon," a program aimed at luring Sorsogonanons who had left for the shores to come home for a visit and perhaps invest in Sorsogon's future.

I felt not unlike a "balik-Antsagan" myself, and am looking forward to more lessons on how to acquaint myself with my inner Bicolana.

'Inis' management

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

IN ANTICIPATION of all tools weekend, I was going to write about the valiant Indian woman who spent 30 years of her life saving the sick and dying in Kolkata, who was inducted recently. But I thought that could wait.

So like to stand aside and give way to a home writer who is so frustrated about this country's government officials and is about to go mad. I am just hoping her anger will not be misdirected. But I believe she is not the only one who feels the way she does, but, to her credit, she is angry enough to find a way to release the rants. Some letters I receive are so toxic that editors but this one from the trash. Here goes:

"Dear Ms. Ceres,

"Every week, as along inspirational as my son. Please give me if I am using your mail as 'inis' management.

"I am an ordinary in fact, hermit-ik, citizen of our beautiful country. Now, they want to impeach Justice Davide. Can I make a request, though? I am not a democracy, right, jakon to police no educating government officials. Can president, senator, congressman, governor, mayor, barangay captain, councilor, and all other officials of the country go to jail? Please, please, please,

New voters have tough time registering in Quezon City

THIS is to bring to the attention of Inglior Commission on Elections officials the giant difficulties voters from the second district of Quezon City have to go through just to register.

According to the two persons sent spanning the flocks (they refused to give their names) and thirty-some others queuing like in such a way as to chose the lucky ones), the security guard distributes registration numbers up to 1,000 only starting at 8 a.m. daily. Registrants have to line up as early as 5 a.m. to be sure that they get their registration numbers. Those who are unable to get a number will just have to take a chance that the processing of the first 1,000 new registrants will be completed before the closing time which is at 4 p.m. Those who are unable to get a number for voters have to keep coming back in order to register.

It is very plain to see that the system is not working. If more hundreds of registrants have to be turned away every day then the Comelec must address the problem immediately. The present system literally discourages new voters to register.

On Sunday, Oct. 26, I accompanied my two children to register only to see a very long queue of people getting registration numbers. We decided to go back in the afternoon, hoping there would be fewer people waiting in line. When we got there, the line was still so long as it was in the morning.

My relatives who live in the fourth district took all of two minutes to complete their registration and validation, at 7 p.m. the day before the voter deserts had closed while that for the first district was calling registrant number 918.

Registrant number 1,000 was called at around 7:45 p.m., and the election personnel were ready to call it a day. My request that those who had patiently waited be accommodated, but our request was turned down. We asked if we could talk to a supervisor so he would hear the problem, but again our request was denied.

With the deadline for registration but approaching, why doesn't the Comelec do something to solve this problem? Comelec personnel cannot just go on getting the excuse that it's not their fault if their can only process 1,000 registrants a day because the law is public for them to act if these registering capacity would give them overtime pay.

These people ought to be reminded that they are servants of, not ready-being paid by taxpayers.

—IGOR MARIANO D. Bagumbayan Village, Tandang Sora, Quezon City

This Filipino says 'Enough!'

I AM a Filipino. And I say "Enough!"

And I call on every one else who refuses to give up the last fabric of decency and dignity in this country to declare the same "Enough!"

I am incensed and exasperated over all those political decisions that do the most disservice to our interest as a people. While the rest of us continue to hope and work very hard for a better life for our families and countries, our politicians appear to work even harder at pulling us deeper into the kruggle.

The government is willing to sacrifice even the last bastion of decency among our institutions in the name of politics. These politicians will spare not even one of the few remaining good ones that have given us a glimmer of hope that we can restore a measure of decency and integrity in public service. And once again, we find ourselves divided, on the brink of disorder, and unable to save not just the flourishing peso but also our dying hopes.

And there is nothing that the leadership of this government will do to the benefit is aimed in the same politicking. She, after all, won the one who chose to betray her word for the sake of political ambition.

I, a Filipino and I say "Enough!" And I am sure that I am joined by millions more of Filipinos in and outside the country in this declaration.

In the name of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and all the good that he represents for us, we will not give up with this. And if this government will not heed us and continue to make a parody of our sense of collective pride, it better find another nation to feed. Because we have had enough!

—LUCY JAMES, lucy_jamie@apollo.is.com

Excuses, excuses

IT was an optimum morning to happen.

I was with disgust the skills of Mayaltel Water Services Inc. that the garbage/utility dockets collected, in Tondo was probably caused by the illegal water pipe connections and the use of booster pumps.

Mayaltel is so much to blame for this outbreak. For a year now, Mayaltel has been cutting off the water supply in Tondo every night. According to Mayaltel's hotline staff, they had to divert the water supply to other areas like Cavite each night. Last July one lady even told me that ex-Tondo residents were coming back to get water at all. Huh? When I complained that Tondo was probably being singled out, she gave me the address and tel. of Mayaltel assistant vice president Virgilio Bondoville and suggested that I can be later a better child, and to expected that not get the courtesy of a reply.

It is a fact that hotwires easily enter the water line (through illegal connections and leaky pipes) when the water pressure is low, or as in the case of post-Tondo, nonexistent at night. There they mount the near meeting's water pressure and flow in to the bosoms of susceptible Tondo residents.

Last night (Oct. 16), Mayaltel did not cut off our water supply apparently to flush out the hotwires in the water pipes. For the first time in one year, there was water in Tondo after 9 p.m.

This morning Mayaltel spokesperson Ana Mandoy blamed Tondo residents not only for the illegal water line connections and not for the illegal water pressure boosters but also for low water flow from other sources. He said that most of the gate residents open fullwater taps connected to their water lines.

Mayaltel will never run out of excuses, and for awhile, it will never admit it is part to blame.

—STELLA D. ROMUALD, 1161 Dr. Sharief St., Tondo, Manila

Heart patient needs operation

MY daughter has been diagnosed to have a "congenital heart disease," in an echocardiograph showed last June 2002. The doctor said an operation was necessary and the operation will cost P70,000 to P80,000. Since I am only an ordinary employee of the government here in Bottom City, a widow with two young children.

I have no one to turn to except you. I have read of the help that has come through the Inquirer's publicity for Rafael Rosas who also needed a congenital heart disease.

My hope is that people who helped Rafael would come again for God's comfort for help in the heart operation of my child. Mr. Rafael Rosas, Jr. is also a child of seven old, and is a third year high school student.

I would like to ask for help from readers with generous hearts. The chance of saving and keeping I will not mind, for as long as my daughter lives, as this is the only way left.

—QUERUBAL CAGMO, Barangay Alfonso Office, City Hall, Dasigan, Bottom City

'As soon as funds are available'

LAST Oct. 13 was the seventh death anniversary of my late husband, Gaudencio Quejos Barbosa, a Philippine Savings Bank Iloilo Office pensioner with Official No. 71 MOD-9304A005, Pension No. 11, Benefit 17(A).

My mother left the Philippines in 1975 and resided with her brother and sister in the United States. Through the special power of attorney, I took charge of all her PSBO concerns.

My mother would from time to time call to see me about matters I had to refer to the PSBO which were the following:

1. Undelivered checks covering the period January-December 1993.

2. Nine checks for April and May 1997.

I started working on these claims in 2002 with letters to the undelivered 1993 checks with numbers PSBO which are like the chart of financial management division, Edwigis Bernardo. Unfortunately in spite of accomplishing all the requirements, one to mention, the "last minute" letter I spent couples with the effort of the Auditor's Office where I sought assistance. I was then advised to write to the Commission on Audit, Regional Office 2, Tuguegarao City. I wrote to retrieve the said claims, even otherwise undelivered.

After my mother's cremation and burial in Ipsan, Caguayan, I continued working on the said claims and included General assistance and a request for my mother's old age pension. With this, I sought the assistance of the chairman of the Presidential Action Office, Jonathan Malaput, who likewise endorsed my letter to Helen Padilla, accounting chief, Disbursement Division. Then I wrote Deputy Administrator Presidential Security Group who in turn sent me application forms for claims with further instruction that I submit the accomplished forms with supporting documents to Susana Respecio, chief, Pension and Gratuity Division. The accomplished forms together with supporting documents were all forwarded to her office.

I waited for the claim to mail, but it never came. I could not understand why no one PSBO assures that my son will be continued by the Senate. But this continues to be ignored, so he could be hired to attended, according to the Senate rules. On the other hand, a constitutional crisis might ensue if and when the House decides to refer to the Supreme Court the question of whether it is constitutional to bring forward another impeachment charge against Davide. The heart of the controversy is whether or not the initial impeachment process could be deemed as "initiated," even if it was not "consummated," or did not prosper.

And to vote the Senate on record, I think that it is important to point out that it is the person of Davide which is accused in this case, and not the institution of the Supreme Court. So, do we think that the high court is under attack, as this is just a democratic exercise that is provided for in the Constitution.

I am really surprised at the way Davide reacted to the issue, whether or not that he will fight it "till death" to counter this charge. I think that he should not have exercised, as this is not a one-to-death fight. What he should have done is to defend himself by explaining that contrary to the accusations against him, he did not misuse the Judicial Development Fund (JDF) which was placed under his trust. As a matter of fact, I believe that the second impeachment charge would have not been filed, had he not given the air of the conspiratory by invoking fiscal autonomy, and by lobbying against investigations to be opened.

In the impeachment charge recently a danger to democracy, is Estrada sinz? Gray that it is not, since he did lessen, and not increase the prosecution and the jury are the Filipino people, who are acting through their elected representatives in Congress, is the Supreme Court in danger of subverting by the impeachment charge? I say that it is not, because in the event that the jury decides not to allow the person of Davide to continue in office, the Supreme Court as an institution will of course continue to exercise, if not with a new Chief Justice. That's democracy in action.

—JOE SERRA, Boni building, east

Constitutional crisis coming?

IT'S not certain yet whether or not the second impeachment charges will really be continued by the House to the Senate. But this could be the next issue to be dealing the nation with. I think that the issue is heating up very quickly because of the wrong impression that it is the institution of the Supreme Court which is under attack, and that to perhaps why some forces are already mobilizing to defend the high court, which they say is the "last bulwark of democracy and freedom." For this year, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. said that the impeachment charge is a "danger to democracy."

I think that it would be fair to senators at this point in time that Davide has really nothing to fear because the majority of the senators, who will act as the jury in the impeachment trial, decide it justthrough, are with the administration. So a verdict most likely decide in his favor.

I also think that a constitutional crisis need not happen, because the Senate need not necessarily have to appear to convict, as he could be tried to abandon, according to the Senate rules. On the other hand, a constitutional crisis might ensue if and when the House decides to refer to the Supreme Court the question of whether it is constitutional to bring forward another impeachment charge against Davide. The heart of the controversy is whether or not the initial impeachment process could be deemed as "initiated," even if it was not "consummated," or did not prosper.

And to vote the Senate on record, I think that it is important to point out that it is the person of Davide which is accused in this case, and not the institution of the Supreme Court. So, do we think that the high court is under attack, as this is just a democratic exercise that is provided for in the Constitution.

I am really surprised at the way Davide reacted to the issue, whether or not that he will fight it "till death" to counter this charge. I think that he should not have exercised, as this is not a one-to-death fight. What he should have done is to defend himself by explaining that contrary to the accusations against him, he did not misuse the Judicial Development Fund (JDF) which was placed under his trust. As a matter of fact, I believe that the second impeachment charge would have not been filed, had he not given the air of the conspiratory by invoking fiscal autonomy, and by lobbying against investigations to be opened.

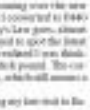
In the impeachment charge recently a danger to democracy, is Estrada sinz? Gray that it is not, since he did lessen, and not increase the prosecution and the jury are the Filipino people, who are acting through their elected representatives in Congress, is the Supreme Court in danger of subverting by the impeachment charge? I say that it is not, because in the event that the jury decides not to allow the person of Davide to continue in office, the Supreme Court as an institution will of course continue to exercise, if not with a new Chief Justice. That's democracy in action.

—JOE SERRA, Boni building, east

'Makuwenta'

LAST week I wrote about French members groaning over the new prices of cigarettes: 5.50 euros a pack, which is converted to P400 each, using a rate of P80 to a euro. In Hungary's Low-pays, almost as soon as the hammer went to press, I happened to spot the latest cigarettes exchange rates in newspapers and realized I was thinking of Serbia, where it used to be P80 to a British pound. The current exchange rate there is about P65 to a euro, which still amounts to about P457.50 per pack.

Oh well, I thought, it was just as well. During my last visit to Europe I kept meticulously



Michael L. Tan

Mainly for work, Filipinos travel a lot, which means we do end up being "makuwenta," a word derived from the Spanish cuenta, meaning to count. Usually, makuwenta has derogatory connotations, to be called makuwenta means you're always counting pesos and centavos, dollars and cents, figuring out who owes whom and when you can collect. In an extended sense, it's used to refer even to social relationships: someone who is makuwenta is always calculating what he can get back otherwise his or she helps out a friend.

I wanted to use makuwenta in a more literal, but less negative, sense. When I was in grade school, our arithmetic teachers used to give us all kinds of problems of comparisons: this price was such-n-such and distance such-n-such. To name a few of the exercises, we had to go from gallons to litres, Fahrenheit to Centigrade, acres to hectares.

There was more to these exercises to memorize. Our teachers knew that we live in a world where different systems have different ways of measuring weights, volumes, lengths, even temperatures.

Who was to know then that so many Filipinos would end up globe-trotting, not as tourists but to make a living and that to survive, we had to learn to be selling calculators, quick at converting from one system to another? For example, application forms to Europe will ask for heights and weights in the metric system, which baffles many of us because we still think in feet and inches and in pounds. Guess if you are 5 feet 6 inches or 1 meter 65 cm, which turned out to only 4 feet 9 inches—4 feet inches, yeah, I mean centimeters, shot of reality.

I grew up with the Fahrenheit system, and still have difficulty when the pilot announces we're about to land in a European city and that it's a wonderful spring day with a temperature of 10 degrees Centigrade. All I know is that 10 degrees, for this Pulo-trained mind, means freezing. Doesn't sound like a wonderful day. (For Filipinos my age, and younger, here's a quick conversion: 15 degrees Centigrade is 59 degrees Fahrenheit, still a bit too cold for tropical creatures like us, but psychologically more tolerable.)

Let's get back to the matter of currencies. I've learned that it isn't always comfortable to keep converting mentally when you're in the United States or in Europe because you end up not saving anything. If you're in Britain for example, the rate now to £ pound to hold your breath, P93.

But even without losing nationwide, you need to get equal bad at what the years are. You learn to pack your lunch when you take a train trip because buying a sandwich and a pack of fruit juice on the train will set you back by 8 euros, converted into P496. You walk a hundred blocks or so to avoid getting the 1 pound on the taxi (pounds) fare, and you're still out P93 for a cup of coffee. You learn to take airport trains into the city feeling very good because it costs only 10-20 P496, the fat fare of 150 being closer to dandelion to P2,700, and promising yourself you can buy dinner or four street books with the savings.

As a Filipino who's been makuwenta through several years (okay, okay, decades) of travel, these currency conversions are sometimes fun, sometimes frustrating because you realize that as far as big chunk is relative to other currencies. There was a time, and this will tell you how old I really am, when we joked about "Made in Japan" products being inferior, and how P1 was equivalent to 100 yen, which we looked at almost as Mickey Mouse money. Today, the Japanese yen is worshipped next to the US dollar, with 100 yen now equivalent to P94.

Then, too, there are times when you start to Taiwan with an exchange rate of P1 to 10 New Taiwan dollars (NTS). We went to Taiwan thinking our own pocket paper because there's none, well, less abrasive, and we were amazed merely drinking prices for 1/4, mapping up pretzel books and records. It's attention right, a record cost the equivalent of P10. Hardcover textbooks were for P50 to P100 each, plastic bin organizers cost up to 20 times more.

Today, Filipinos going to Taiwan pack their computer coffee and instant noodles to take to lunch in their hotel rooms because Taiwan's prices are as high as those in Tokyo. There aren't ghetto books anymore, several generations of Taiwanese students gained from those cheap books, learning medicine and engineering and now producing high-quality high-tech goods to sell to those struggling Filipinos who needs to catch at their wallet pesos.

Meanwhile, Filipinos queue up to apply for jobs in Taiwan, the IITE is now as coveted as the greenback and the Japanese yen. While we used to divide New Taiwan dollars by 10 to get pesos, we now have to multiply NTE by 2.7 to get pesos.

What's most depressing is that these days, you don't have to read your crystal ball to see that pesos is depreciating. In the last year, I've lived through Thailand's Asian Financial Crisis, the Philippines' Southeast Asian project for the University of the Philippines. Each time I visit, the Thai baht, whose collapse in 1997 set off the Asian financial crisis, seems to be getting stronger, even while our peso continues to slide. Two years ago it was about 1 Thai baht to 0.1 but now the last few months, I've had to multiply. That makes that by 1.1, then 1.2, then 1.3, to get the peso equivalent. When I go this month, it will be 1.4.

Oh well, we can still find consolation going about being a millionaire in Indonesia, where one US dollar is equivalent to 10,000 rupiah, or Vietnam, where it's 12,000 dong. Let's not get too smug though. The way those countries are coming ahead, I wouldn't be surprised if some day we end up multiplying, rather than dividing, when we visit.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

If you have any comments, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of issues and stories in the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate Letters Editor Ruby Ingente, Chino Roces Avenue corner Tigbe and Mayorcio Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4792, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and contact telephone or pager number or e-mail address for our files for purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Across the NATION

Law firm close to GMA loses land case

By Franklin Caligtad, PDI Mindanao Bureau

BUTUAN CITY—In what appeared to be a landmark decision on a controversial agrarian reform case, Malacañang has ruled in favor of the 11 Surigao farmers embroiled in a 26-year-old land dispute with a company being backed by a law firm very close to the administration of President Maranyaal Aroyo.

The committee on agrarian reform of the Office of the President, which is headed by Executive Secretary Leandro Mendoza, recently ordered the revocation of a 1977 order of the Department of Agrarian Reform, which granted the Surigy Cacao Garcia and Investments Development Corp. authority to convert its 1,000-hectare coconut farm in Surigao City into exempt it from the coverage of land reform.

The conversion of the agricultural land into a housing development area was was granted by then Agrarian Reform Minister Conrado Estrella despite the presence of landless tenants on the property.

Conflict

The conflict started when the company failed to satisfy the conditions set by the agrarian reform department, including the granting of residential lots to the farmers who would have their chance to make claims on the property as agrarian reform beneficiaries.

This prompted the farmers to occupy the land.

Relieved

The farmers said they were relieved with Malacañang's order and that they found out that there was nothing to fear about the Villarosas and Aquinoges law firm, which is considered very influential being very close to President Maranyaal Aroyo.

Being a "Baloy power bloc," the law firm was known for its closeness to the President and has come under attack for allegedly causing delays in the handing over of decision-making in clients.

Accused

The law firm had been accused by a German company of extortion in exchange for favorable decision favoring the German firm's exposure in building the now controversial Bilar Aquino International Airport located in Bohol.

Campos Villarosa, a representative of the farmers, said the Villarosa and Aquinoges law firm had earlier argued that the conversion of the agricultural lands for a housing project was illegal and ratchet the threats of the law.

However, Bernado said his committee had heard other issues.

"The order of conversion covering the entire Lasalle village is hereby revoked and set aside," Bernado said in his order.

Slain Abra mayor's wife losing faith in teams probing husband's murder

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The wife of slain Mayor Dionisio Bersamin of Tineg, Abra, is asking President Maranyaal Aroyo to review the anti-crime task forces she formed to address a series of political assassinations in Northern Luzon.

None of the task forces has so far produced results, Bersamin-Bersamin, an employee of the National Police Commission.

She asked Malacañang to make the police accountable for the task forces' failures, after she discovered that some of the government witnesses to the murder of her husband in Calanasan, Lagaan, in 2005 had reportedly resigned.

Mayor Bersamin was gunned down at his car while attending a wedding ceremony in a church in Calanasan on Oct. 2, 2005.

Mrs. Bersamin said despite Napeñas.com's oversight powers over the Philippine National Police, the agency has not been informed about the activities of these task forces.

"Most of the task forces submit reports to the police chiefs relative to their units, which are mostly directly updates of these ones. I only obtain additional information if I formally request for them, but I never get anything substantial," she said in Bersamin.

Her plea has been supported by no opposition and no allowance is petition posted at www.abra-

CARETAKER
A boy displays the tools of his trade, cleaning tombs and graves, for the coming influx of people to cemeteries on All Saints Day in a public graveyard in Dapao, Abra's Ilocos.

Thousands flee Negros floods

BACOLOD CITY—Heavy rains brought on by tropical depression "Ursula" triggered flooding in the southern end of Negros Occidental, leaving 33,940 residents to evacuate, the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO) reported.

A man identified as Bradlaire Bechi, 25, was reported to have drowned in Ilog town, 101.7 km south of here, according to reports reaching the PSWDO.

In Cauayan town, 116 families with a total of 1,000 individuals' homes were destroyed, in Hinoba (Ilo) 1,750 111,251 persons) evacuated; in Binalbagan City, 253 families (1,131 persons) evacuated.

Provincial agriculturist Ignacio Tabiano said at least P634,394 worth of crops were destroyed. —Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Cops arrest 6 hijacking syndicate members

CAMP GEN. ALEJO SANTOS, Bulacan.—Six members of a hijacking syndicate operating in three Central Luzon provinces and with a wide retail network in the Cluster Philippine community were arrested in Bocaue town here by Batangas municipal councilors and policemen.

But the capture of the suspects began with the seizure of driver Teodoro Apanado, 38.

Apanado, earning a 10-wheel truck loaded with P900,000 worth of sugar, destroyed the suspects who fled and ordered him to stop at Barangay Bia in Meycauayan.

In a press conference in Camp Olivas, Barangay Apanado related how he pulled over to ignore the shots. He said he was a victim of a previous highway robbery and would not want to be a victim again.

He said he continued driving until policemen, alerted by Bia councilmen, caught up with the suspects.

The shots for the eight suspects who were on board two vehicles began with the councilmen in Barangay Pono. They spotted the two vehicles cruising around Brgy. Caballangkal Pob in the same village.

"This is a long-time criminal operation," Chief Supt. Vidal Querol, Central Luzon police director, told reporters as he cited the officials led by Barangay captain Ronaldo Soriano.

Senior Supt. Wilfredo Sorjano Jr., Bulacan police director, said a hired gunfight took place, leading to the escape of two other suspects.

Those caught were identified in Paul Co, Ricardo Cortz, Jorge Bobbo, Joel Tafost, Jason Fuentes and the security guard Paul Cambronejos.

Supt. Edgardo de Leon, Meycauayan police chief, reported seizing the four cars, two 10-cid homemade revolvers, a .45 cal. pistol, bullets, a hand grenade, three hand cuffs and forearms. —Benjie Oreja-and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

4 soldiers wounded in clash with NPAs in Agusan town

BUTUAN CITY—Four soldiers were hurt during a clash with communist rebels in Agusan del Sur province on Oct 9 on Monday morning, a military report said yesterday.

The report said elements of the 29th Infantry Battalion were conducting patrol operations in Sitio Talisoan in Barangay Del Monte when they clustered upon at least 20 New People's Army rebels.

The report added that a 15-minute gunfight ensued and the soldiers succeeded in driving away the rebels.

No casualty was reported on the side of the 58th Inf. pursuing troops recovered a backpack containing communist documents and personal belongings, according to the report.

The encounter occurred just two days after the military captured two raiding rebel leaders operating in Agusan del Sur.

Lt. Col. Rowino Manong, spokesperson of the Army's 4th Infantry Division based in Cagayan de Oro, said the military would continue to drive against the communist rebels using flushing-civilian relocation to deny the NPA of mass base in Caraga.

The NPA remained active in the region, which is one of the country's poorest areas. —Franklin Caligtad, PDI Mindanao Bureau

ROUNDUP

Dad's child abuse

CAMP NAMPIN, Lucena City—Two youngsters accused their father of alleged sexual abuse, police in Pililla, Quezon, said. Police identified the suspect as Jonathan Tamayo, 41, farmer and resident of Barangay Hulo Mauan, Pililla. Police said the 13-year-old victim complained to the mother that her father repeatedly abused her since she was eight years old. During the investigation, the reported daughter of the suspect also disclosed that her father had also raped her. The suspect is now held pending the filing of criminal charges. They charges violates under the standards of the sexual assault act of 1998. —Emilio Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bingo center padlocked

LUCENA CITY—Lucena City Mayor Vicente Buaya Jr. has padlock a closing down the operation of JEC Bingo at the Ex Barig Building boundary the city's downtown area yesterday. A police report said the gaming center has no permit from the mayor's office after it was considerably closed one month ago, presently by the Ex Pandanan Cathedral and two private Catholic schools. Bingo operation is prohibited by Batas Pambansa Bilang 42 which declares that Tuesday and Friday are the days. —Emilio Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

8 nabbed for drugs

STA. ISMAEL, Laguna—Police last week arrested eight persons in possession of more than 1.2K grams and several sachets of shabu in separate operations. Arrested were Rhodel Pido, 33, and Marcial Cabello Jaguna, 37, both of Bitas, Laguna, and under Lato Cipres, 23, of Barrio Cabo 2, Sta. Ismael. Nabbed in

E-mail: sr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Joe Bandoquil
Bureau Chief Teresito G. Belmonte

Shrine is sanctuary for troubled souls

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo
Legazpi City

ON ALL Saints Day not only her loved ones and relatives but also devotees of the Our Lady of Guadalupe will again remember the late Benita Rañola Gonzona, a Bicolano-Chinese businesswoman philanthropist here.

Driven by a dream and her devotion and obsession, Gonzona built the only shrine of the Our Lady of Guadalupe in Bicol.

Gonzona, former dean of the Graduate School of the Bicol Wood College of Legazpi, frequently went on pilgrimages to Mexico where the Lady of Guadalupe made a miraculous appearance several centuries ago to the poor Indian farmer Juan Diego.

Diego was canonized as a saint by Pope John Paul II in July 2002.

Those visits to Mexico had so engrossed in Gonzona's mind the image of the Our Lady of Guadalupe that she became obsessed with the idea of putting up a shrine atop a hill.

Moreover, she said the Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared on her in a dream and told her to buy a lot, build a chapel and establish a crisis center for married couples.

On Dec. 12, 1995, she commenced the shrine of the Lady on top of a hill near the Pambansang Dagang Gayam in Barangay Bonga on a lot she bought for P6-million.

Death

On June 15, 2000, however, she died of stomach cancer. Her demise even had there for at least three days before she was buried in the Chinese cemetery in this city.

Some of her friends and acquaintances told the reporter that before she died, she had prepared a "pre-funeral party" at the Red Carabbean in Legazpi, coinciding with her birthday on May 1. This surprised everyone, as she appeared as have been already preparing for her death.

She had told her friends that her body should be laid in the Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine in Bonsgan.

The description of her dream is now engraved in the marker on the main door of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine.

The Lady is said to have made eight appearances since 1531.

Four of them were to Mexican farmer Juan Diego, one to his uncle Juan Bernardino, and one to St. Juan Zumarraga, the priest who first refused to believe to the accounts of Juan Diego.

The remaining two, according to historians, were miracles and expenses shown by the Lady.

Those portraits in the miraculous healing of Bernardino's illness and the mysterious shape and sizes of human figures learned to the eyes of the image.

Dream

Those who had known Gonzona believe that her dream is another miraculous appearance of the Lady of Guadalupe.

The Auxiliary Bishop of Legazpi Lucio B. Quinambao said the business man Gonzona even consulted him regarding her dream and plans to put up the shrine.

He said she could really see through Gonzona's eyes her overwhelming devotion to the Lady of Guadalupe.

After Gonzona's death, her family turned over the management and direction of the shrine to the Saint Raphael Parish under the supervision of Msgr. Quinambao.

The church, meanwhile constructing building and the life-sized images were donated to the parish.

Gonzona's family has maintained a low profile and very private life since then.

The shrine

Now, the Lady of Guadalupe Shrine in Barangay Gayam atop a hill overlooking the city proper. It features life-sized images of the characters of the 14 Steps of the Stations of the Cross, arranged along the hill slopes.

The 23-foot image of the Blessed Virgin Mary is located at the hilltop. Feast day is celebrated every 12th day of December.

The shrine is similar to the top-hill shrine in Mexico, reachable through at least 200 ladder steps.

Visitors of Gonzona from Manila and the United States commented that "indeed this is like climbing up the where the apparition of the Lady Guadalupe to Juan Diego took place."

On top of the hill, one can see Mayon Volcano and the entire Legazpi City. Albay Gulf and the Rizalistikan Hill. The Cagsawa ruins Hill to Barangay Victory Village).

The shrine also has an adjacent seminar house for troubled married couples and at least five cluster rooms.

Gonzona said, "Let this be a sanctuary for troubled souls and a haven for peace and reconciliation for couples in distress."

Actual image

The shrine project was supervised by architect Hercules Calleja.

It took at least six months before the church was opened to the public. The parish had to wait for the actual image of the Lady of Guadalupe from Mexico.

The convoy of the Lady of Guadalupe was made possible through donations of those who believed in Gonzona's dream.

Through letters and phone calls, Msgr. Quinambao was able to make a request to the secretary of the Archbishop of Mexico, and persuaded him to deliver the actual image for the replica to be built in the shrine in Bonsgan.

The image arrived on Dec. 12. The parish was astonished to read at the bottom the words: "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Patrona de Mexico de los Indios Filipinos."

Msgr. Quinambao said the Philippines was specially mentioned because of its research, the Lady of Guadalupe was the patroness of the Philippines before the Immaculate Conception.

The ground breaking started on May 18, 1995 and the project was completed on Dec. 8, 1995.

Msgr. Quinambao officiated Mass during the shrine's inauguration on Dec. 12, 1995.

Mass is held there every Saturday.

Crowd drawer

The shrine has now became one of visitors' destinations in the region and one of the most visited places every Lenten season.

Many of the visitors have been touched and inspired by the life story of Gonzona.

Msgr. Quinambao said that during the visit of Cardinal Jose Tomas Sanchez five years ago, he admired the shrine for being well built and for its commemoration of a sacred place.

Residents note are the emergence of a growing flock of devotees. But may eventually duplicate that of the second pilgrimage and hot-tot of the Our Lady of Peñafrancia in Naga City and the Nuestra Señora de Salambao in Antique, Tiwi, Albay.

THE 28-FOOT image of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine and the life-sized images of the characters of the 14 stations of the cross on a hill in Legazpi City. VINCENT CIMATU

Baltog, Handyong, Bantong come to life in Ibalong Festival

By Joyce Pajilanes
Legazpi City

BICOLS greatest mythical heroes once again come to life as Legazpi City celebrates the Ibalong Festival this October and transforms this city by the foot of Mayon Volcano into a huge theater for folk arts.

The Ibalong Festival takes its inspiration from the 15th-century epic poem that presents the pre-Spanish times to the land called Ibalon or the peninsular that Bicol province.

Previous Legazpi City Mayor and now Federal Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Commission (Unesco) Commissioner Noelido Rosete started the celebration in 1992 in a bid to instill among Bicolanos a sense of identity and pride.

Mythical heroes

The Ibalong epic describes the exploits of three mythical Bicol heroes—Baltog, Handyong and Bantong—who transformed Bicol into a bustling civilization.

Baltog was known for his conquest of ferocious monsters and animals like the "tawhang" that heaves forth rings of fire, the one-eyed cyclops, a wild buffalo, a great crocodile, serpents and other wild beasts that destroyed the crops and livelihood of the villagers.

He gained respect after winning seven of battles he fought to protect the villagers and free them from the disastrous attacks of the monsters.

But he failed to defeat the only serpent known as Oriol, which could transform into a beautiful and innocent-looking maiden to seduce her victims.

Handyong "named" Oriol after a battle. In the end, Oriol fought hand to hand with Handyong to kill the monsters that tormented the villagers.

After the successful battle against the monsters, Handyong planted rice and other crops in the mountains.

He also made the first bancas that sailed through Bicol.

Bantong, the third mythical hero, was also famous for killing the baliwan, half-beast monsters called Baliog that had black magic.

It is said that Baliog turned all those who challenged him into stones.

But Bantong realized that the monster was a great sleeper, especially during daytime.

He attacked the beast while it was sleeping and killed it, bringing joy to the villagers.

Festival highlights

This year's festival was highlighted by a street presentation, which recreated the epic's important chapters including the arrival of the three mythical heroes, the battles between the heroes and the beasts, and the followers of Ibalong.

Performers from different schools and organizations, clad in their indigenous and colorful dance-inspired costumes and grotesque masks, rendered choreographed dances in the streets.

THOUSANDS of people went to Rizal Street to witness the yearly street parade of the Ibalong Festival. VINCENT CIMATU

Mayon Volcano, famous for its perfect cone-shaped mountain, provided a dramatic backdrop to the street dances.

Other activities in the month-long celebration included sporting events, garden shows, beauty pageant showcasing the beauty and talents of Bicolanas, a trade fair of local products, broadcast contests featuring famous local national personalities, recognition program for outstanding Bicolanos and various socio-civic and leisurely activities.

Mayor Noel Rosal inaugurated another exciting event in this year's festival, which was the contest for the longest basket of the cooked hairy tree wrapped in coconut leaves, topped by fine-eating contest.

More than a thousand pieces of this were lined up along Rizal Street, the major thoroughfare in this city, and the one who made the longest line was declared winner.

Rosal said the event was conceptualized to promote the local fine industry and help these makers market their products.

He also hoped that the activity would land in the Guinness Book of World Records.

The month-long revelry is capped by the feast of Saint Ibalod, the patron saint of Legazpi City.

Rosal said the festival also aims to instill in the minds, especially of the younger generation, the legend that is real, especially Legazpi City is known for.

"Ibalong is more than just another street dancing fiesta. It is a celebration of the resiliency and indomitable spirit of Bicolanos amid the challenges of daily life," he added.

ONE of the highlights of this year's Ibalong Festival in Legazpi City is the street presentation that recreated the important chapters in the Ibalong epic. VINCENT CIMATU

Ciarra's name forbidden in John Lloyd-Bea promo

By Marinel R. Cruz

ABS-CBN management instructed its writers not to mention in any of its publications the name of actress Ciarra Sotto—John Lloyd Cruz's real-life girlfriend—in any write-up promoting the young actor's love scenes with Bea Alonzo.

This, according to a source, was to ensure that the focus would be on the John Lloyd-Bea love team, which was first seen on television in the now defunct television "Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay" and is now on the big screen in Star Cinema's "My First Romance."

John Lloyd and Ciarra have been going out together for more than a year now. Last June, persistent rumors said Ciarra intercepted suicidal pills from Lloyd wanted to break up with her to protect his movie love team with Bea.

Both John Lloyd and Ciarra denied this. Ciarra claimed she simply must have taken some sleeping pills then—and that the show biz press had blown up the incident out of proportion.

"Ciarra is a very understanding girlfriend to John Lloyd," Bea told Inquirer Entertainment. "She knows that this is all part of the job."

Sexy-diva Dawn opposite John Lloyd's fusion in their first movie team-up. The other pair in the movie is multi-hit of John Prats and Heart Evangelista.

"If ever they fight because of the love team, John Lloyd never makes me feel I am responsible for it," Bea told a group of writers.

She said she first met Ciarra when the latter, daughter of Sen. Tito Sotto and Helen Gamboa, visited John Lloyd on the set of "Kay Tagal." Bea and Ciarra chatted over coffee with a group of friends during a taping break.

"She's very nice," said Bea of Ciarra. "We're really not that close, but we used each other text messages once in while."

In "My First Romance," John and Heart star in the episode titled "One Love," directed by John-D Lazatin.

John Lloyd and Bea are in "Fan Hungry," directed by Don Escudero. John Lloyd plays a soccer star player who had to go to the United States to undergo a heart transplant. Bea's character is self-recovering from the loss of her boyfriend (Dominic Ochoa), who decided to migrate to the United States where he died in a car accident. "John Lloyd is the more experienced actor," said Bea. "He helped me a lot by giving me acting tips."

Bea's role in "Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay" as line student Katrina was unexpectedly well received by viewers. The role also earned her a nomination for best actress in a TV drama from the Philippine Movie Press Club, pitting her against veterans Lorna Tolentino, Cherie Pie Picache and Cherrie Gil.

"Maybe our love team came at a time when people were looking for a fresh pair," said Bea.

Bea—real name, Prudence Angeline Sandico—is half British and Filipino. She grew up in Tagaytay and was from with her mom, stepfather and two siblings in Tagaytay Ridge.

Her mom, Mary Anne Sandico, broke up with her British boyfriend...Bea's dad...when Bea was only 4 years old. Bea has not seen her father since.

"I no longer look for my real dad," said Bea. "I've done with that chapter of my life. "Talking about that chapter only brings back sad memories of my childhood. I have a lot of good things going on in my life right now."

Bea finished 3t last Oct. 24. Unlike other kids her age, she would rather stay at home, cook or work on her computer. She is now a high-school junior under the Department of Education's home study system. She plans to take up tourism in college.

Bea expects not being able to go to a normal school because of her busy-busy bea schedule. "My work is really, really tiring," she stated. "It also gets boring sometimes. But I love what I do. Not everyone gets this kind of break to show biz."

BEA says John Lloyd is a good boyfriend as Ciarra, with whom she sometimes exchanges text messages.

THE OTHER pair in the new episode romance is made up of John Prats and Heart Evangelista.

SIZZLEHOME

FLEISS

'Black Hawk Down' star sent to jail for beating Heidi Fleiss

LOS ANGELES—Millionaire US movie star Tom Sizemore was Monday sentenced to six months' jail for beating and threatening swimsuit Hollywood madam Heidi Fleiss.

Sizemore, 48, the star of such hit movies as "Saving Private Ryan" and "Black Hawk Down," was convicted in August of committing domestic violence on his former girlfriend Fleiss.

But Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Ronnie Bassett stayed Sizemore's sentence pending a Jan. 30 hearing at which his jail term may be cut to half.

Sizemo also placed Sizemore on three years' probation, ordered him to undergo domestic violence and anger management counseling and to pay $1,200 in fines.

The actor also entered a no contest plea to another charge of battery involving a different woman. The judge sentenced him to probation and a $400 fine on the charge.

The actor did not speak during the sentencing, which was attended by Sizemore's Hollywood bad-boy pal Charlie Sheen, but presented a letter to the court in which he apologized for his actions.

Sizemore was convicted in August after a high-profile trial in which Fleiss was the star witness, but sentencing was postponed to allow the actor to complete treatment for what his lawyer Mollael Fitzgerald described as a "substance abuse problem."

The actor was convicted of a range of charges, including inflicting bodily injury in Fleiss, making criminal threats and obscene and harassing phone calls to her, and vandalism. He remains free on $100,000 bail.

Fleiss, 37, hit international headlines when officials tried to force her to reveal her "black book" of prostitution clients, who included Hollywood powerplayers and stars, following her arrest in an undercover sting operation in 1993.

She left prison in 1998 after serving 20 months of a 37-month term for conspiracy money laundering, tax evasion and attempted pandering.

During Sizemore's trial, she testified tearfully in being battered by her ex-boyfriend.

In one alleged incident in November of 2001, she claimed Sizemore beat her after she told ghost jock Howard Stern during a national radio interview that she did not think much of his latest movie.

The brunette daughter of a well-to-do Los Angeles physician said she did not call police because she was on federal parole.

After the strikes, she said she "loved Sizemore and I was very good to him and what he did to me was wrong. I want to pretend I never met him." —AFP

DID YOU KNOW...

Tobe Hooper, 60, and his son Liam, 22, are each either only once a week—when they host ABS-CBN's Sunday show, "Scary Stories." Tobe says they are near of the same build and height so that they can swap clothes. He says Liam sometimes borrows his suits and other formal wear. The dad is relieved that the son is finally graduating in December, with a degree in hotel and restaurant management, from De La Salle's College of St. Benilde. (Tobe himself is a product of De La Salle University).

Pimentel to challenge 'illegal' SC order

From page A1

(senators), are the same people but performing a different function."

Pimentel stressed, however, that he was not talking about Enrile's innocence or guilt. "The Chief Justice is a friend of mine," the senator said. "I believe in his integrity. I'm doing this not because [his] integrity has been compromised. No. I'm trying to uphold the provisions of our Constitution so that the rule of law will prevail."

Unanimous

At the House, Rep. Gilberto Teodoro (NPC, Tarlac), a principal proponent of the second impeachment complaint against Enrile, said the chamber was "unanimous in its decision not to recognize the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court" over the case.

"It's a matter for the Senate to decide," he said, echoing Pimentel.

Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. said that the House was "bare" with the high court's issuance of the status quo order, and that suspension should "protect [the chamber's] political integrity."

Focus: Discussions that started Tuesday afternoon, the House's game plan is to send a "special pleading" to the tribunal on Nov. 8 with the message that the chamber did not recognize its jurisdiction over the Enrile impeachment.

On Nov. 8 (when the House resumes session), it will transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate. (See banner story, Page A1.)

Out of the fray

Senate President Franklin Drilon wants it clear that the chamber is undecided in the controversy over Enrile's impeachment.

After consulting with the Senate's legal department and the lawyer-senators of the majority bloc, Drilon submitted a two-page resolution Tuesday telling the Supreme Court that the chamber should be spared from being embroiled in the crisis arising from the high court's status quo order.

"This manifestation is submitted as a matter of comity and respect for a co-equal branch of government, but should not in any manner be interpreted as... (a concession) to the jurisdiction" of the tribunal, Drilon said.

He said the petitions filed by various parties seeking to prevent Congress from impeaching Enrile were "plainly premature and have no basis in law or in fact."

"The constitutional duty of the Senate to constitute itself as an impeachment court commences only upon its receipt of the Articles of Impeachment," he added. "To date, the Senate has not received [those]. Thus, the Senate is not called upon to perform any act."

Serious implications

Drilon said in a press conference that with the Senate unselfishness to the high court, he expected the chamber to eventually be excluded from appearing for oral arguments on Nov. 8.

"The reality here is that it is the House which will have to defend [its] action, not the Senate, because all the events that took place took place in the House," he said.

But he still said, Drilon said, the high court's status quo order had "very serious implications" and required careful study.

1st in history

"This is the first time in our legal history that the Supreme Court has issued an injunction against Congress," he observed.

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara said a similar move or a separate move could ensue, saying the high court order was "premature" and an "unfortunate intervention" that would "unnecessarily provoke a constitutional confrontation."

"The Congress and the presidency are trying to find an honorable settlement," Angara said in reference to the efforts of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Speaker Or Rosario to find a "win-win solution" to the controversy. "That should have been the last run for the Supreme Court to take a hands-off policy."

He said the tribunal should not have intervened because, one, political institutions were trying to settle the matter, and, two, the Chief Justice himself was involved.

Purely political

Angara, also a lawyer, cited the legal principle wherein the court does not interfere in the disposition of a case "when the matter smacks of a political nature."

"The matter of impeachment is purely a political solution provided by the Constitution, and the process should have been allowed by the Supreme Court without it stepping in at that point," he said.

He also said the adjournment of the House Tuesday was "a more effective freeze" than the status quo order "because there is by the action of the body itself, and no one will be accused of having interfered in [House] processes."

Only by the Senate

Pimentel expressed the belief that the six petitions filed with the high court questioning the constitutionality of the second impeachment complaint against Enrile involved matters that were well within the competence of the impeachment court to settle.

"Everything that is connected with the impeachment can be addressed by the Senate acting as an impeachment court," he said.

He reminded the justices that impeachment was a purely legislative function from its initiation by the House to its conclusion by the Senate.

"Any abuse committed by the House regarding the impeachment can be corrected only by the Senate, and any abuse by the Senate can be corrected only by the people," he said. "That is how, in our system of government, separation of powers and all that [works]."

Should the high court continue to interfere with the constitutional duties of lawmakers, "it would mean that the system of checks and balances provided for in the Constitution is [for naught]," Pimentel said. "Making sills because then, who is going to check the executive or the judiciary if any other person, until Congress, acting as an impeachment body, what to do and what not to do?"

Military adventurists

Pimentel said he hoped that "military adventurists will keep out of this thing, and let the civilian agencies of government settle the problem."

He said the abrupt adjournment of both chambers of Congress on Tuesday had kept the issue hanging. "And that's the last thing that people would want to see happening in the country. I think most of our people were an end to this question of the second impeachable," he said.

Pimentel predicted that there would be no militant movement. But he lamented that the controversy had been kept hanging—"a terrible thing for our people."

"In other words, the setting for a countrywide crisis was done because of the participation actions taken by the Supreme Court in ordering Congress to maintain the status quo. It's not so much the way it was worded, it is the fact that there is such an order that is questionable," he said, adding:

"No matter how diplomatically it was worded, it was still an act of impropriety."

Up in arms

The bar septuchers in the House are up in arms over the status quo order.

Rep. Pompeyo Magsaka (Lakas, Davao City) said impeachment was a "political process not subject to the review of the judiciary."

He said that with the standoff between Congress and the Supreme Court, the intervention of Mr Macapagal was needed more than ever. "Presidential persuasion is now needed because the presidency is the third co-equal branch. GMA can put some sense [in] and defuse the situation."

Trespassing

Rep. Rodolfo Aliston (Pwersa ng Mas), San Juan) said the high court was "trespassing." He added: "It has no power to halt an impeachment process."

Rep. Georgidi Aggabao (NPC, Isabela) said the tribunal's order was a "direct challenge to Congress, a co-equal branch."

"It is constitutionally suspect because impeachment is an exclusive congressional domain," he said.

Four activist Rep. Satur Ocampo (Bayan Muna) was turned off by the high court's status quo order.

Ocampo said Enrile should "squarely answer the charges of fund release on the basis of simple honesty ... instead of resorting to technical-constitutional arguments to save his skin."

"The issue of fund release is, at bottom, a question of truth, integrity and justice," Ocampo said.

PIMENTEL: Impeachment court is "higher than the Supreme Court."

Cory leads prayer rally for Davide

AT THE ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY yesterday afternoon, former President Corazon Aquino spearheaded more than 500 youths and members of civil society at a prayer rally to do their part and to take a stand on issues affecting the country.

"Let your voices be heard. You are the future of our country. That's why I urged the young ones today to join you—the real young ones," she said.

Aquino's "crusade" kicked off with a mass at the Church of the Gesu inside the university. She said she came to the Blue Eagle campus to rally and support for Senate President Franklin Drilon.

Aside from Aquino, the supporters of Davide included stars, lawyers, academicians and self-proclaimed moms.

Other speakers who defended Davide after the films were his wife Virginia, who is also the chair of the Philippine Association for Volunteerism Effort, and Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J., dean of the Ateneo Law School.

While Aquino and Bro. Eddie chose not to touch on legal matters, almost all the speakers said Davide's impeachment last week was unconstitutional, politically motivated and unfounded in violation of Charter provisions.

Manila Archbishop Ruben Cardinal Sin, who could not attend the Mass, conveyed his desire for a "principled, just and reasoned solution to the crisis."

Just resolution

In a message printed by celebrant Fr. Catalino Arevalo, S.J., Sin said that he sees "astounding results [due to the call] by a multi-sectoral prayer rally on by a pragmatic shouting and heckling," that is, later resolution.

But Sin, Arevalo said, remained "staunch[ly] on the side of Davide" whom he defended as a man of integrity and honesty.

"We are not in a confrontational mood to name any feelings," Arevalo said in his homily, adding that they were praying for the enlightenment of the country's leaders.

Other speakers, who were hanging out in the Ateneo campus, were Senator Edgardo Angara, Sen. Gov. Bebot Fuentebella, because of the young boy's fondness for hamburgers.

Wimpy is the hamburger-and-shake chain set in the long-running cartoon "Popeye" where Wimpy "will gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today."

The grandfather Fuentebella was fond of assigning names of cartoon characters to his grandchildren. One of the young Fuentebella's brothers is nicknamed Archie.

His children

Carlos Rep. Gilbert Remulla, Fuentebella's cousin, brother in the ill-fated Speaker Ilgnes Pita, and the congressman was "someone who doesn't disclose his" when he sees a good fight.

"He's a very nice fellow, straight-forward and definitely not a talong," Remulla said. "He's principled and he's respectful of proper processes."

Fuentebella started as political affairs officer of his father when the latter was still congressman. He was in charge of working with barangay chairs.

Teodoro's pal

A day after the impeachment complaint was filed in the House, Fuentebella and other

Davide tormentor youngest ...

THE FUNKIEST generation up front in a huddle behind closed doors at the House of Representatives: from left, Representatives Darlene Antonino-Custodio, Hilarion Ramiro Jr., Felix Willam Fuentebella, Mark Cojuangco. STORY ON PAGE A12

degree from the University of the Philippines.

He stopped his law studies at the Ateneo de Manila University when he could no longer juggle his time as a congressman.

He is the son of former Speaker Antolin Fuentebella who replaced then Speaker Manuel Villar in 1998 in the aftermath of Villar's controversial removal as the Senate of the impeachment complaint against then President Joseph Estrada.

Popeye's Wimpy

Fuentebella was given the nickname Wimpy by his grandfather, former Comelec Com. Gov. Felix Fuentebella, because of the young boy's fondness for hamburgers.

Wimpy is the hamburger-and-shake character in the long-running cartoon "Popeye" where Wimpy "will gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today."

The grandfather Fuentebella was fond of assigning names of cartoon characters to his grandchildren. One of the young Fuentebella's brothers is nicknamed Archie.

His children

Carlos Rep. Gilbert Remulla, Fuentebella's cousin, brother in the ill-fated Speaker Ilgnes Pita, and the congressman was "someone who doesn't disclose his" when he sees a good fight.

"He's a very nice fellow, straight-forward and definitely not a talong," Remulla said. "He's principled and he's respectful of proper processes."

Fuentebella started as political affairs officer of his father when the latter was still congressman. He was in charge of working with barangay chairs.

Teodoro's pal

A day after the impeachment complaint was filed in the House, Fuentebella and other

Salonga, Vidal declare Davide innocent

and Jose Boda College.

Cebu archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal also practically claimed Davide when he called "a good Christian and a good statesman" during his support of Drilon amidst the ill-fated crisis that engulfed the Philippine Senate and other aspects of the country.

Pastoral letter

"My fellow Cebuanos, we know [Davide] to be a man of principles and fidelity, as shown in his [private life and as an active member of the Church of Cebu," the cardinal said in his first-page pastoral letter. "His track record as a public servant is unassailable in honesty and integrity, competence and service."

Vidal also appealed to members of the House of Representatives, who signed the impeachment complaint, especially the two legislators from Cebu, to reexamine their course of action. "We appeal to your sense of justice, reason and basic decency to uphold the interest of the country first," he said.

Law of evidence

In defending Davide, Salonga said "the evidence in no way points more than all the dishonorable assets and expenditures, particularly the items specifically mentioned on Page 24 of the impeachment complaint, were approved and by Chief Justice Davide alone. Not by the Supreme Court en banc.

Salonga said the congressmen belonging to the Nacionalista Party-plus Coalition could make allegations of graft, malfeasance, breach of public trust and other offenses against the Chief Justice. "But in the law of evidence, the best evidence of the administration of the fund, particularly the committee recommendation and the approval by the entire Supreme Court, is the document itself," he said in a statement.

Committees

Salonga said that while the director Ferdinand Marcos gave absolute power to the Chief Justice in the administration of the JDF when he issued Presidential Decree No. 1869 in 1984, Davide formed committees, mostly headed by associate justices, to study, discuss and recommend disbursements of the fund.

"Chief Justice Davide ... transformed his sole executive power and duty into an instrument of democracy by appointing several committees that would study, discuss and recommend to the entire Supreme Court for approval or disapproval disbursements and expenditures of the JDF," Salonga said.

Some of the committees are even headed by justices who, according to Salonga, are somehow identified with former President Joseph Estrada and Presidential Executive Assistant Edwardo "Eduardo" Colmenares.

Documentary evidence

"If this democratic intervention is an unpardonable offense because it is a deviation from EO 1049 issued by a dictator, the entire Supreme Court should be impeached, which would include, incidentally, the dissenting justices in the concurring case [that you do not] against MR founder Edgardo Colmenares Jr.[," Salonga said.

"If this documentary evidence, which is known to every member of the court, was known as 'Exhibit A' and 'Representations [filed]' 'Evidence' and 'Affidavit Fuentebella[,' then there is probably a willful suppression of evidence," he added. Teodoro and Fuentebella are the proponents of the impeachment complaint.

90 percent

Salonga said the Commission on Audit report on how the Judiciary Development Fund was spent since 2000 showed that the only of 100 of the big allowances to the JDF was 90 percent from 2000 to 2002—nearly more than the 80 percent minimum mandated by PD 1949 in the JDF law.

Salonga said that the composition of JDF arbitration proceeds, portions of which went first to the Philippine Veterans Bank and late schemes as the treasurer, showed that the ratio of cost of living allowances to income was 120 percent in 2000, 78 percent in 2000 and 75 percent in 2002.

The 90 percent of the total for the three years, which is greater than the 80 percent required minimum," Salonga said.

Express outrage

In Bacolod, the Negros Advocates of Reform (NAR) called on Negros congressmen to express outrage over the move to impeach Davide by sending text messages to their congressmen who signed the impeachment complaint.

Winning block address and chairman Rodolfo Montinola issued a memorandum and some barangay in Bacolod at about 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon from the Capitol Lagoon Park.

"As sovereign citizens, we demand that congressmen—now that the impeachment complaint is filed and pending in the House—express outrage over the [JDF Consolidation Development Fund] and P100 million pork barrel per year at they are wasting their own right power over the JDF," Pahl said.

In Cebu, the Citizens for Judicial Independence (CJI) urged Congress to continue ousting black sentiments and participate in some hearings while the impeachment issue remained unresolved.

'Thief in the night'

Fr. Conrado Iseli, a convenor of CJI, said their group had opposed to Senator Sen. Miguel Coy. proposals. "Upon weighing all data and information, we concluded that the process behind the impeachment proceedings must first unfold in the night not Senator Dunding Calmenares who happens to come to [us Filipino]," he said.

"We have nothing against the people working in the Hyatt because these are good people," he said.

The Cebu City government headed by Governor Michael Rama initiated a mass hookup at 9 p.m., which was participated by by urban poor groups on board 10 open-air carts[Kaohsiung, Japan and 46 multi-cabs. Reports from Bernard Bendadoro, Tina Santos and Blanche S. Rivera in Manila, Carla D. Gomez, Bernadette Pacis and Florencio Napallacan, PDI Hospet Barcelo

Ganzon family fights over his dead body

[illegible]

But it is not to be for former Sen. Rodolfo T. Ganzon who died here yesterday at 81.

A few hours after he died, his two children in Quezon City and Iloilo were on the verge and grandchildren stormed the hospital and wrestled out his body without the consent of his second wife, Rosa Rojas, 37.

Two hours in to two separate funeral parlors arrived due to the allegations by Rosa Rojas Ganzon that the children were the heirs of arrangements and his last will.

The children prevailed and brought Ganzon's remains to the family ancestral home in Barangay San Antonio, Molo District, where the wake is now being held.

First wife

Ganzon's first wife Rebecca Padolina died in 2000. Two years later, he married Rosa in civil rights in Cebu City and in Catholic rites the same year.

But Ange was never welcomed into the Ganzon clan by the Ganzon children. She has declared of 12 years, and has lived her all this time. The Ganzon property was another issue of contention between Rosa and her stepchildren.

Sued father

In 1996, the children of Ganzon sued their father for alleged misbehavior with the late Ganzon's property were partitioned among the children and Ganzon.

Rosa said what was left was their conjugal property, here and Ganzon.

The children were sued for guardianship, with Ganzon's son Peterson seeking to be the guardian of his father's properties.

When the Regional Trial Court dismissed the case, the children elevated the case to the Court of Appeals.

Recently, the Ganzon siblings also filed for an annulment of the marriage of their father to Rosa Rojas. Rosa's court on the ground that Rosa had falsified certain entries in their marriage certificate like her age and place of birth. Eventually the hearing was scheduled on the day Ganzon died.

Visiting rights denied

Ganzon's children also asked the court that they be given the right to visit their father in the hospital for two hours every week. But the court denied it.

Ganzon had been confined in the hospital since May 2002 due to various illnesses. There days after he was hospitalized, Ganzon had to be intubated to a respirator and to the lungs.

He could not speak for one year and five months due to a tracheotomy, said Rosa.

Multi-organ failure

Last Friday, his doctors led by Ricardo Dayrit told those that Ganzon was suffering from multi-organ failure and should go through dialysis. But Rosa said she decided against the dialysis upon the request of Ganzon.

Rosa and Ganzon's daughter failed to attend [Last, yesterday. The doctors tried to contact him twice. He was pronounced dead at 8:11 a.m. on Wednesday, today after Ramsomed 77.

'Prince of common man'

The family lived over his dead body in a tragic ending of a life led in service to his people and country.

Also dubbed "Prince of the Senate minimum man[", Ganzon was known as the Father of Free Education for sponsoring the law that provided for free elementary and secondary education while he was senator from 1963 to 1969.

Among his contemporaries are Senators Jovito Salonga and Ms. Eva Estrada-Kalaw.

A scion of then President Manuel Quezon

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) hereby caution local government officials and the general public against fixers who offer to facilitate fund releases for DA projects in exchange for a hefty commission.

These unscrupulous people secure copies of fund release documents through dubious means. The documents are then used to lure would-be victims such as local government officials, private contractors and suppliers, to deal with and pay down payment to the fixer.

It has also come to our attention that copies of DA requests for release of funds get into the hands of suppliers and contractors through enterprising "middlemen". These "middlemen" entice said suppliers and contractors to pay 20% advance commission in exchange for contracts in projects supposedly to be funded from the submitted request.

Agency requests do not guarantee release of funds. Furthermore, release of funds strictly follow prescribed systems and procedures that do not require any assistance from fixers.

We urge the general public and all concerned to be vigilant and report such anomalous activities to the DBM or the DA.

EMILIA T. BONCODIN
Secretary
Department of Budget & Management

LUIS P. LORENZO, JR.
Secretary
Department of Agriculture

FOUR DIGIT
1 0 4 9
SUERTRES
9 2 4

MEGALOTTO 6/45
14 17 20 25 30 38

METRO

E-mail: pi_metro@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Abelardo S. Manalo

Tondo folk had whiff of danger

By Tarra Quismundo

PEOPLE cleansed by the outbreak of acute gastroenteritis in Tondo, Manila, had smelled danger coming but couldn't escape it.

Even before the sudden rise in the cases of diarrhea, residents of Velasquez Street in Barangay 163 have been complaining that water running out of their faucets had a bad odor.

Barangay chair Felipa delos Santos said their tap water smelled so bad at first in the drainage ditches that lined the neighborhood's streets and alleys, where mostly lower middle-class residents live.

"We can't even use it for washing clothes," Delos Santos said in an interview.

Fears the tap

In his barangay, some 3,000 residents get their water from their faucets connected to a single pipe of the Maynilad Water Services, Inc.

Delos Santos said that among the residents in his area, the worst affected by the dirty water were the children.

The chairman added that children aged 5 to 10 had been rushed to the Gat Andres Bonifacio, due to stomach ache, vomiting, and diarrhea, symptoms of acute gastroenteritis.

From midnight last Thursday to Monday night, some 318 residents of Velasquez, Santolan, Severina, Capulong, and Tandoc streets in Tondo poured into 48 Tondo hospitals in Manila.

More cases

The other day the hospitals, including Tondo General Hospital, Gat Andres Bonifacio Hospital, Gagalangin Tondo and Mary Johnston Hospital, reported that the confirmed cases of acute gastroenteritis are at 215.

The number, however, could be higher after the beaches hosted that same of those stricken were taken to Manila and other private medical centers in the area.

Clemente San Gabriel, Manila Health Department administrative officer and sanitation inspector, said yesterday that 29 new cases had been recorded.

Its laboratory confirmed that 11 cholera cases had been identified as of yesterday, but the names of the victims were not released.

But San Gabriel added that they were still determining if these were related to the outbreak as cases of diarrhea were common among Tondo residents.

And while the Manila Health Department declared the outbreak as already considered contained, the water in Tondo continued to stink.

And the same Barangay chair a schedule, Felipa lamented.

The chairman explained that the smell usually reached its stinking peak at 6 a.m., then gradually receded as the day progressed.

Clear by afternoon

Lay Salazo, who lives with eight of her family near the barangay hall, said that the smell cleared during the latter part of the day.

"My road is topped with gallons of water which I get from the faucet when the water doesn't smell," Salazo said.

She admitted having installed a booster pump at her house. Only and it was because very little was already coming out of her faucet.

Delos Santos said water pressure was low in their area.

YOUNG victims of the seepage of E. coli bacteria in the water supply of an area in Tondo get treatment at the Dr. Ramon Medical Clinic, a neighborhood clinic. They are not included in the official count of the number of people downed by a diarrhea in the district.

Maynilad springs to action

THE MAYNILAD Water Services, Inc. has been working overtime to stop the outbreak of acute gastroenteritis in Tondo, Manila, as president Fedrel Alonzo III said yesterday.

This developed as the water firm explained belief that the problem could have been avoided had the National Housing Authority, which developed the area 30 years ago, used pipes and fittings that met quality standards.

Alonzo, in an interview, stressed, said the water firm's Crisis Management Team was trying to pinpoint the cause of the water contamination in the Tondo Foreshore Area.

The crisis team met yesterday to map out solutions to the problem which it hoped to resolve as soon as possible.

Among the key initiatives undertaken were:

- The increase in water pressure in the affected area to flush out contaminants
- Deployment of 18 water tanks in addition to the six tankers ordered to supply water to residents
- On-site treatment of water with chlorine
- The disconnection of illegal water connections and the immediate repair of 235 leaks caused by illegal

According to Alonzo's statement, low water pressure in the area had prompted residents to resort to illegal connections and water pumps that eventually led to the problem being catched into the water system.

He said they were looking at the use of "unbreakable PVC pipes and polybutylene tubings" as a major cause for these illegal acts.

Alonzo noted that the area used to be a garbage dump which was reclaimed and then developed 30 years ago by the NHA as a low-cost residential area.

He explained, however, the contracts that its owner was eliminated, possible and extends least and international standards.

PNU prof murdered at home

By Lolit B. Salaverria

PROFESSOR Ramon B. Reyes would not be coming back to teach at the Philippine Normal University after the memorial break is over.

He was found dead on Tuesday inside his apartment unit at room 17-C of the GSIS building on Antonio Street, Sta. Mesa, Manila with several stab wounds in the body.

PNU Dean Carmenia and the dead teacher coming from Reyes's apartment unit prompted the president of the building's homeowners association, Nick Valente, and utility man Rudy Lim to enter Reyes's unit to investigate the scene.

When Valente and Lim opened the door, they saw the professor's body lying on its back on the living room floor. It was in the early stages of decomposition.

Operatives of the police found the walls, furniture and other fixtures in the living room, while broken glass littered the floor of the victim's apartment, which indicated that there put up a fight with his attacker/s.

He added that Reyes's bedroom was also in disarray and his personal belongings were strewn on the floor as if the suspect had been searching for something.

No forced entry

Cadiente also said there had been no forced entry in Reyes's home. This signified that the victim knew who his murderer was and let the latter in his house.

Reyes, a professor of Speech-Language Specialist (effective teaching) and Guidance Filipino at Rizal Evang Dasyllabic College of Filipino Education, graduated, and also a cum laude graduate of the PNU, was last seen alive on Thursday last week when he went to pay his dues with the homeowners association.

The professor's body was brought to the Universal Funeral Parlor while the police searched for his relatives.

Reyes is the second professor to be found dead at the GSIS residential building in Sta. Mesa in the past two years.

Last Sept. 25, Adamson University professor Abel Ramos was also found dead in the building unit. A murder fraud injury, apparently, robbery, cash and jewelry were missing.

LTO starts issuing plates that can outlast cars

SOON you can literally have your car turned over after the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) gave the go signal for the Land Transportation Office to issue so-called sturdy license plates (VLP).

DOTC secretary Leandro Mendoza launched the VLP program pursuant to Presidential Memorandum Order No. 40 which authorizes the department to issue optional motor vehicle plates bearing the inscriptions preferred by the vehicle owners.

In launching the program, Mendoza said the VLP would only be issued to a duly registered motor vehicle owner who has a regular license plate.

The regular plate shall be the basis for the renewal of the registration of motor vehicles.

Mendoza said that the VLP would be effective for a lifetime, unless revoked by the LTO due to violations of law and non-compliance with the agency's rules and regulations.

The sturdy plate shall be issued only once in a duly registered vehicle.

Commercial or for hire vehicles, ambulances, government, diplomatic and other exempt vehicles (OEV) would not be authorized to display VLPs, Mendoza disclosed.

DOTC spokesman Thompson Lantion said the VLP was already available for reservation at any LTO authorized district office nationwide.

A reservation fee of P1,000 per category will be collected either through the authorized depository banks or LTO cashiers and will be deducted from the cost of the plate.

Lantion said that upon reservation, the VLP shall be attached to the rear portion of the vehicle.

HEROGIDA. Vanity is in.

LOYOLA (MARIKINA) MEMORIAL PARK RE-ROUTING
Starting Oct. 31, the Philippine National Police and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority will be enforcing the above routes for All Souls Day.

Woman, maid slain in gangland rubout

By Luige del Puerto

A HOUSEWOMAN and her maid were found brutally murdered inside their home in Pasig City Tuesday night in what police described as a gangland style killing.

Shirley Castillo, 38, of 13063 Jupiter Street, Maryland, Greenhill 3, Mapagsinop in Barangay Pinagbuhatan, was discovered lying on the floor inside the victim's bedroom at about 6:30 p.m.

She was stabbed twice in the back and shot in the head at close range, the police said.

Her maid, Jean Arnaiz, was beaten inside the servant's quarter and made to bend on her knees before being shot twice, investigators added.

The police said the murders were done by members of a robbery gang victimizing bus passengers in the residents of Metro Manila.

"The businesswomen knew too much about the activities of this gang, so they killed her. We could not rule out that he is also targeting the wrong time," Insp. Jessy Ayala, head of the city's criminal investigation unit, said.

A plastic bag containing cloth found before the arrival of Castillo's. Two in particular, except Jessa, 14.

Ayala said when they opened the bag, they found 45 different ID cards inside, believing their belief that Jessa was working for the robbery gang.

Ayala said Lianna other persons to be a Makati policeman, he also owns a bulletproof vest.

Lianna denied any involvement in the two killings.

A carpenter working on the house, and three men, entered Castillo's residence at 5:30 p.m.

He then heard loud shouts coming from the house.

After the three men left, Lianna came out of the house carrying a bloodied knife, the police said. (With a report from Edgar Sembrano)

PNP all set for observance of All Souls Day

By Christina A. Pates

THE PHILIPPINE National Police has deployed in force in preparation for All Saints' Day this weekend.

Southern Police District Director Jose Carmelo G. Sta. advised commanders who would be going home to the provinces or to the cemeteries to be vigilant.

He said a large number of people was expected to rush to bus terminals starting today to the GSIS intensified police presence at bus terminals, especially in Pasay City and Muntinlupa City. He said the SPD would use sniffing dogs from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency to detect bombs, prohibited drugs and other illegal materials in the terminals.

The police chief also warned commuters against suspicious-looking luggage, usually left unattended.

He said homeowners should double-check the locks on their gates, doors and windows before they leave home.

Gutierrez added that the SPD would integrate the security plans of local police units and coordinate with the local government and barangay establishments.

In Manila, the Western Police District has gone on full alert starting yesterday.

WPD spokesperson Chief Insp. Cerra Agunod yesterday said police checkpoints would be deployed starting today to the four cemeteries in the city to make sure that no bombs would be planted there.

The WPD will also set up a command post along Blumentritt Street beginning Friday. A Red Cross station will also be in place, along with a tent and funeral area and a communication center.

Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza has also directed DOTC district centers to tighten the security of all seaports, airports, sea anchors and bus terminals against terrorist attacks.

The Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) has also acted to ensure commuters.

Engr. Nestor Inducto, officer-in-charge of LRT operations, said ship trains would be dispatched every 10 minutes during the Saturday's extended routines, such as Rizal Parks, Blumentritt and R. Papa.

He said LRTA would also deploy more personnel to man tickets booths and would set up additional ticketing booths to avoid long queues.

Inducto, however, said that a limited train period would be maintained, he added.

Malabon City battle of wits worsens

Edson Tandoc Jr.

EMPLOYEES of the Malabon City Business Permits and License Office (BPLO) have yet to receive their salaries yesterday.

A sudden change in the office's head official has caused the delay, said the employees are anxious that a leadership crisis might develop after acting Mayor Jaypee Sandoval reassigned BPLO chief Marvin Asistores to the Office of the City Administrator.

Sandoval assigned on Monday Asistio Villegas to Asistores's post. This has some confusion among the employees, on whose signatures should appear in their daily time records.

Asistores has also refused to leave his office. About 28 employees of the BPLO have stood by their chief, refusing to recognize the new head.

It BPLO employees protest, they said that when one of them money in their City Hall's cashier in the morning for the scheduled release of salaries, they were told that their wages were "on hold."

The BPLO employees said they were being required to have their daily time records signed by Villegas. But most of them said the location they would recognize only Asistio as their head.

But Hernando Tabalon, spokesperson of Sandoval, told the business yesterday afternoon that the confusion stemmed of some "administrative matter."

He said that the BPLO employees should have their daily time records from Oct. 15-16 signed by Asistores. But Villegas, the official who took over, should be the one to sign their records for the days after Asistores was reassigned.

In all 3 p.m. yesterday, the BPLO employees from yet to get their salaries.

Noel Alvarado, an employee, said the problem that no body had explained to them what is to do with their daily time records so they could get their salaries.

Asistores, who said earlier that he would not relinquish his post, yesterday told the business he would file an indefinite leave on Nov. 3 to spare his employees from further tension and confusion.

Tandoc took over as acting mayor after Malacañang suspended Malabon City Mayor Irmale Vincuya on Thursday for "abuse of authority."

In an earlier interview, Vincuya said his lawyers were exploring all legal possibilities in questioning the suspension either before the Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court.

MetroBriefs

Fire drill panic

A BOMBE of explosions hit Araneta Center and people in it panic yesterday at around 12h. But the explosions turned out to be a fire drill conducted by the Bureau of Fire Protection, according to SPO4 Edgardo Bagcalso. He said staff members of the fire station had set off three fire crackers at 2:30 p.m. at the back of the building by order of the fire chief. But some one overheard it as explosives and reported to the company for control to conduct a fire drill, alarming the people in the area. The drill was conducted behind the building (see above). He said he would be charging individuals using Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code and Presidential Decree 1185 or the Fire Code of the Philippines.

QC water cut-off

MORE barangays in Quezon City will have no water for 23 hours starting at 11 a.m. Saturday.

Mrs. L. said 66 p.m. of the following day, Maynilad Water Services Inc. said the water service interruption would be due to interconnection works in the center of Edsa and Roosevelt Avenue. Barangays to be affected are Valenzuela, San Antonio, Sta Monica, Bagumbayan, Muñoz, Talipapa and Pasong Tamo.

Remember Ator!

FOR THE 8th time, Jaime "Ator" Manuela, the founder of Ator Showroom in the 60s, came against Sen. Panfilo Lacson, but before he shows up at his arraignment before a Pasig City Regional Trial Court. Manuela is charged with three counts of estafa for duping Gaithonde Enterprises of a total of P95,000 in 1997. Judge Celso Larena of Branch 71 had to reset the arraignment to Nov. 3, the after re-received his arrest order for.

Jaime del Prado

Body in sack

A SACK floating in the Marikina River yielded the body of Bernardo Bacuang of Pinay Street, Barangay Concepcion Uno, Marikina City, on Tuesday morning. He was found with a nylon sack and wrapped in masking tape. The body bore multiple stab wounds. The police have yet to determine the motive behind the killing.

Edgar Allan Zambrano

THS '73 reunion

FAMOUS High School Batch '73 will be holding its 30th Reunion on Dec. 21 at De Century Park Hotel in Malate, Manila, at 1 p.m. For details please contact Mrs. Lorna at 0917-5000500 or 526-1319.

Discovery's 25th

DISCOVERY Philippines is Oct. the pioneering one-hour prepaid card phone in their country, with celebrities as its 25th anniversary smiles. It, highlighted by S. Ruben Torres's talk on "The Challenge to the Filipino Entrepreneur in the 21st Century." Torres will follow Tito presents will go to Tanding of cultural activities. 200 lucky engaged couples, the same activities that are usually meant for each other and much more. Discovery Philippines is also introducing interactive communication technologies to connect to married couples. An graduation of Discovery can also attend to attend the entertainment. Tickets are available at P500 per couple. Please call Lara at 475-1371 or visit DPI website at www.discoverypartnered.org and register online.

SC-House impasse to be resolved

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

IT SEEMS of some quarters that there will be a constitutional crisis as a result of the quarrel between the Supreme Court and the House of Representatives over the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide. It will not come to pass.

The Filipino people won't stand for that.

There will be a way out of the crisis. A solution that will satisfy both parties—the supreme court and the House—will be found.

* * *

It's a case of utmost people or pride on both sides.

However, pride does not the window when both sides are the lilly of their action.

The justices and the executive government concerned will set aside satisfying their egos and give way to national interest.

Others in the justices and congressmen, you should be ashamed of yourselves!

* * *

Instead of staying in his air-conditioned office at the main office of the Comelec on Intramuros, why doesn't Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos pay a visit to the Makati Comelec office?

I've received complaints from at least two Makati officials that very disorderly hiring of first-time voters at the Comelec-Makati office.

Here's a text message from Ben Damasco, former journalist:

"Hi Men, ng lavor pa (please) sa iyong site (site) ni Abalos? Ang gulo (disorder) ng mga tao (people) sa Comelec! Why not limit (limit) the (think) kay site system guy. I do a thing 4 him if he can (can't) do it on the first time! pls text, my dear (daughter), a lot (many) fri (friends). Tnx."

* * *

Another friend, Basit Angeles, said that she and other first-time voters lined up starting at 5 a.m. or three hours before the start of office hours only to find that there was disorderly processing of their papers.

Because of this chaotic situation at the Makati Comelec office, many of them left the line and decided not to come back.

Some of the first registrants were turned off by the disorderly of the Comelec-Makati employees.

"We had to lose working in line for hours, only to be told by disorderly rude employees," Angeles said.

Mr. Abalos, the disorderly of your subordinates reflects on your leadership!

* * *

Two witnesses in the Kuratong Baleleng robbery case said they were dismissed from jobs using their testimony because they received money from the camp of Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

The witnesses are Myrna Sonnerido-Madera and myself, Go Cadiz. They said they were made to sign affidavits of desistance prepared by them by Lacson's aides. For this, Abalos said she received P1 million while Cadiz said he got P500,000.

Pity are they coming out again! Probably because they couldn't get more money from Ping and company?

* * *

Anyway, it's before they have decided to testify again against Lacson and company these coming days.

Their confession of being bribed in order not to testify is out now.

SPO2 Eduardo delos Reyes, the principal witness in the Kuratong Baleleng case, was also reportedly given goodies and endless of money to withdraw his testimony. He has scheduled now to Canada.

The prosecution panel in the "Kuratong" case must probably go to Canada to try to convince Delos Reyes to go back on his retraction and testify against Ping Lacson and his co-accused.

I know the person who bribed Delos Reyes. He is. This person acted as Lacson's go-between for Delos Reyes. He has since parted ways with Ping Lacson.

* * *

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara says that actor Fernando Poe Jr. could make the best candidate for President in 2004 because he has an edge.

Mr. Angara, isn't boosting a class?

FPJ is a "boxer" just like his friend, deposed President Estrada.

* * *

If the opposition can't field a presidential candidate better than FPJ, then Sonnerido-Madera and myself may be the dope!

I have nothing personal against FPJ. I find him a very nice person.

But he's not qualified to run our country just because he killed more Japanese soldiers in his movies.

Kobe-Shaq rift rocks Lakerland

O'NEAL (left) and Bryant watch the game from the bench.

Phil fines Bryant

EL SEGUNDO, California—Just a few hours before the start of the regular season, all was not well in Lakerland.

Coach Phil Jackson fined Kobe Bryant an undisclosed amount for his highly critical comments of teammate Andrew Bynum and the team lost by 29 minutes to Dallas 113-84 between two sequences that has escalated into a full-blown feud.

"There were no signs or indication that it would snowball the way it has in a matter of 36 hours, so we'll see what happens from here," Jackson told Bynum and Bryant, who were fined as doubtful for the opener against the Dallas Mavericks after he said he didn't think his surgically repaired knee was strong enough to withstand the rigors of a 48-minute game. The Lakers expected him to play until hearing otherwise Monday.

The other thing hurting Bryant was his feelings, said it appears there's no easy way for the Lakers to soothe them.

Bryant categorized O'Neal during a telephone interview with ESPN Calling him "childlike," "unprofessional," "selfish," "fat" and "jealous," he also accused him of overstating the severity of his foot injury last season when he reported to training camp overweight.

Bryant's comments came a day after O'Neal said the Lakers were "very much" talking that Bryant needed to be more of a team player—as evidenced when he took 40 shots in a season-opening loss to Phoenix.

At practice Monday, Jackson ordered the two not to discuss the dust-up with reporters. He fined Bryant for delaying what could be his return to practice.

"He left me feel in opposition yesterday and he didn't explain that," Jackson said. "I think this is something we've talked our players to work out on their own and to protect if they have personality conflicts."

The conflict between O'Neal and Bryant has been simmering the eight-or-so seasons together. AP

MELONE slams over the Dallas Mavericks' Matrixx Walker.

Payton, Malone give LA big lift

LOS ANGELES—The new-look Los Angeles Lakers didn't need Kobe Bryant to do what they always do against the Dallas Mavericks.

With Gary Payton leading the bench mob and Karl Malone providing plenty of veteran flair, the Lakers put aside their squabbles and defeated Dallas at home for the 20th consecutive time—109-99 in the NBA opener Tuesday night.

Outscored 24 points each to start, and Malone added 15 points, 11 rebounds and two assists to barely earn the fourth triple-double of his career. Both received standing ovations when they left in the fourth quarter, with Bryant seeing them from the bench and receiving applause.

Shaquille O'Neal, Derek Fisher and Ron Artest—three of the holdovers from last season's Lakers—each added 15 points.

Bryant, engaged in a public feud with O'Neal, can can bemoan of a season in his surgically repaired knee and did not join his teammates on the bench until the end of the fifth quarter.

In San Antonio, then-Spurs Gatorz Lesage off an offensive rebound with 25 seconds remaining gave San Antonio the lead for good, as the Spurs hung on through three missed shots by Phoenix to beat the Suns, 103-92, in the season opener for both teams.

In Philadelphia, Allen Iverson had 26 points and 11 assists, and Jrue Thomas added 15 points as Philadelphia beat Miami, 89-74, to give coach Eddie Jones a win in his debut. AP

SPORTSWATCH

BP cagers leave today

THE DEFIANT BA-Stanes-bound "I-love-Philippine-culture-to-meet's basketball-bringing-Indonesia today for China for a series of Friendship Games as their first foreign game by the Bay. S. 45 Gymnasium, Olongapo City, Southern C. Lim, members presumed of the Basketball Association of the Philippines, will act as delegation head. Lim will be accompanied by Daniel Lopez, PBA commissioner Chino Trinidad, Presidential Spokesman Edwin Lacierda, PBA Media Bureau Chief Jose Mari Martinez and a team of officials and coaches. Lim said the delegation will be composed of 12 players, 2 coaches, 1 trainer, 1 physical therapist, 1 team manager and 1 media officer.

Tough Truck meet

MORE 4×4 trucks and vehicular off-roaders will challenge opponents in adventure-type terrain during seven-stage Cotabato Jeep Sports Association's first 2010 Tough Truck Challenge on Nov. 28-30 under the Bombom Global City. Organized by the Manila Offroaders Inc. (MOFRO), the first leg of the competition—which is big-driver's descent then good-looking portrayal and for long sports utility vehicles and 4×4 trucks. "We've carved out the 4-kilometer off-4×4 racing and we're responsible for keeping control the road conditions," said Association Jeep Sports Association's Jeep Sports' today," said Brian Cruz, president of the organizing MOFRO. Keeping the event in order will be Rico Nancy Sanchez, event race director. Defending champion is Nikolai Kuznetsov of Tokyo Bay. Bryan Tuvera, treasurer of MOFRO, satisfied an additional business in the Active engagement in the "Drivers on the Rocks," a special side show on Nov. 29 and 30.

Adayan in 3rd round

AFAD Adayan stunned Jerry Rogers 11-17, 15-8, 15-12 and Fortis topped Michael Gonzaga's 15-11, 4-15, 15-11, setting the to reach the third round of the Boys' 10-under division in the Tully's Asian Badminton Championships at the Los Baños Gymnasium. Adayan will next play Rhea Angeles, who crushed a 15-1, 15-11 win over Jaime Mirasol, while Sara Sullivan Fernandez Parag, who won by default over Mark Christian Arabejo. Other winners were also Jefferson Pacheco over Christian Gabael, 15-6, 13-15, 15-11; Mikaela Mercedes over JC Mendoza, 15-7, 15-8; Mikael Paulino over Mark Gamonay, 15-12, 15-2; Robert Jabanig over Erick Pagaduan, 15-7, 15-3; Christian Bonifacio over Mark M. Jesus, 15-7, 15-7; and Roberto Villaluz over Frederick Salas, 15-4, 15-6.

NBL resumes Nov. 5

THE PHILIPPINE National Basketball League Regional Conference will commence Nov. 5 with the Davao Del Norte Dragons opening the one-day. Against the defending Cordillera Luzon-one Falcons at the Intramuros gym in Makati. Manila. The Eagles, who held off lacking/looking Oh-lord Cebu Lakers, 86-72, last Oct. 24 at Bacolod's Angkor Stadium, also scrambled to have their hands full against Davao Legal Tella's Falcons in the first 5 p.m. contest. Pampanga's NBL Cup action then shifts to Intramuros Cebu Coliseum on Nov. 8 and 9.

Gabito . . .

Philippines president Manny Lopez, Tatamon Park and Laguna are seeking final clue Thursday.

In return, the Filipinos also held away with various turbo miscellanies that secured them of at least 6 wins medals.

Johnny Arcilla and Patricia Jayme beat Nigeria's Kelani Ingole and Grace Amadim, 5-4, 6-3, 4-2, while Adelfa Mendez and Gemma Mae downed compared Sancha Mateo and Shiela Garcia, 7-6, 6-4, also from Nigeria.

Arcilla, who combined with Jayme in the tennis in the women's team event on Sat, said he is gunning for the silver medal in the men's singles this Friday.

"I know one of them Kenya, Mercedes would deliver," said Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association president Go Teng Kok.

SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Melencio
Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

Passport Padala
459-2100
1-888-10-241-2100
AIR 21

BASKETBALL

Pacers at Pistons Jr. 8 p.m.); Nets vs Warriors, 10:30 p.m. (10:30 p.m.); Solar Sports, Suns vs Magic, 7 p.m.; 101.13—Get rid of NBA action as Indiana clashes with Detroit, Dallas meets Boston State and Cleveland takes on Sacramento

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Compiled by L. Mangubat

AFRO-ASIAN GAMES

Gabito bags silver

By Ray Gutierrez

HYDERABAD, India—Filipino Lerma Rubaiton-Gabito leaps into the 1st Afro-Asian Games history Wednesday, clearing 6.30 meters and clinching the silver medal behind local favorite Anju Georgy in the women's long jump at the 30,000-seat GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium here.

Gabito secured second place to her second of three attempts, edging Nigeria's Aghatise Ilaye, who also recorded 6.30m, but in the miss.

"I stayed focused and just did my best," said Gabito, champion of the Manila leg of the Asian Grand Prix tennis and bronze medalist in the Manila Asian Athletics Association Championships last month.

Georgy, the Busan Asiad champion and third placer in the Pusan International Championships in Paris, cleared 6.50m.

Another Filipina sister, Marivelle Torres, landed 8th with a best try of 6.20m.

The Philippines earlier gained one bronze medal, but lost one Tuesday.

Combining their strong showing in the pool, the women's 4x100-meter medley relay team placed third behind South Africa and India.

But there was gloom in the tennis camp when heavyweight Noelo Gumbi 2-1 victory over nigerian Ibrahim Malik in the quarterfinals Monday uncontested by the grand jury.

The jury claimed by Uganda's Francis Nyangweso, a retired general, conceded Malik, a veteran in the All African Games in Abuja recently with a 14-4 victory that sets him into the semifinals against Uzbekistan's Bahaddyn Sokuiev.

Composed of juniors aged 16 and below, the nine-member team of Lizza Madoz Marquez, who had earlier separated athlete in the 10m women's backstroke, Aphrodite Magbanua, Marinelle Arabejo and Nicole Santiago clocked 4 minutes 48. 13 seconds. South Africa scored 4:24.38 for the gold and India 4:37.32 for the silver.

It was the third bronze for the swimmers, who are members of the reserve Southeast Asian pastime held in San Pablo City.

Gutter's downfall left lightflyweight Edcel Tabanao, flyweight Violito Peña and lightweight Roel Laguna to carry the fight for "the boxing squad headed by Admiral Boating Association of the

(SEE PAGE A-24)

IBC pulls out; Barakos thwart Tigers

By Jose Noyarro

GAME SUMMARY | Asiatic Crossed
4 10:00 — IBC 1, RFM 0 (MR
8:50 p.m. — RMF 0, Pantheon

THE INTERNATIONAL Broadcasting Corporation (IBC-13) has stopped airing the Philippine Basketball Association games after television cover-age partner MBC-4 failed to pay its airtime dues.

Meanwhile, Jesse Barrell achieved a personal goal as the first final Barakos outshoot the Cora-Cola Tigers, 89-84, last night in the Samsung PBA Invitational Conference at the Philsports arena.

"I want to keep our streak going and in the same time beat the top team in the league. Those were my personal goals coming into the game," said Barrell, who paced the Barakos with 38 points and 13 rebounds.

The ballog can lowerme dur nee gand tatsen ancone nominee Cum the stipulal at nine wrish roughly PH million chat IBC-13 had rumored the

(SEE PAGE A-24)

HARD RIS Sanchez of Davao (176) engages Darlene Ocion of Zamboanga in a tight battle in the 400-meter hurdles final. Sanchez eventually won the gold.

Davao rules Palaro

By Marc Anthony Reyes

TUBOD, Lanao del Norte—Davao, gaining a windfall of golds from the ball games, swimmed Jose Northern Mindanao yesterday to secure a two-thirteen championship sweep of the 2002 Palarong Pambansa at the Mindanao Civic Center here.

Grabbing a total of 28 golds after topping football and girls' softball, Davao finished with a frustrating 43 gold medals on top of 28 silvers and 24 bronzes in the secondary division.

The Davaoeños fell one gold short of that total in rolling the elementary level with 42 medals shared by lasted 13 for athletics and to-gold romp for winning boys volleyball. They also picked up 41 silvers and 23 bronzes.

Northern Mindanao wound up with a gold-silver-bronze collection of 26-9-20 in the secondary division and 31-10-29 in the elementary bracket.

Proving a boon for Davao was the Palaro rule giving members of winning teams in the ball games gold medals based on the required number of starters for each sport. Thus, 11 golds were given to football, nine in softball and baseball, six in volleyball and five in basketball.

Davao blocked Northern Mindanao, 3-0, for the football title and secured 11 golds. The Davao scorers were Sylvester Sarza, Jose Lloyd Alcoseba and Aaron Buhaynas.

Nine more golds boosted Davao's overall output in girls' softball as it crushed Central

Hohmann trips Bata

Django subdues Strickland

By Dennis Erasa

GERMANY'S Thorsten Hohmann, the reigning World Pool champion, doubled Philippino idol Efren "Bata" Reyes, 7-4, and moved closer to a semifinal berth in the On Cue II-an Studio 23: Battle of Champions yesterday at the Robinson's Galleria in Mandaluyong City.

San Francisco "Django" Bustamante made up for Reyes' ouster back at he mastered foil "The Pearl" Strickland, 7-3, to boost his bid for one of two semifinal slots reserved for the Philippines in this much-awaited event organized by ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. and Payer Sports.

Strickland, a five-time US Open champion, and Bustamante also scored their big master bag gags was lost to transit from Australia.

Also striking without his cue stick was Johnny Archer, but he equaled the challenge of Bustamante, 7-4, for a U.S sweep.

Bustamante, thus, improved his record to 2-1. The multi-titled Bustamante, a native of Turlac now based in Kiel, Germany, lost to Hohmann, 4-7, but beat Mika Immonen, 7-4, last Tuesday.

Hohmann, a 24-year-old native of Halle, Germany, played flawlessly as he surmounted Bustamante's one-pocket-shooting throughout to register his second win 5-1.

A former member of the Immonen army, Hohmann entered his campaign in the four-day Masters tournament by beating Bustamante, 7-4, and up-and-coming Tenio, 7-4, last Tuesday.

However, the match-loving Hohmann bowed to Fil-Canadian Alex Pagulayan, 7-6. It was sweet revenge for Pagulayan, who lost to Hohmann in this year's World 7-Championship held in Cardiff, Wales.

Against Reyes, Hohmann lived up to his nickname "The Hitman." Hitting the perfect angles and finishing a superior breaking game, the German pride teamed in an early 6-2 lead in the race to 7. Championship Format.

Reyes, who just arrived from Poznan, Poland, where he also lost to Hohmann in the semis of the World Pool League, rallied to within 4-6, but the cool and calculating Germans took the 11th rack with ease.

BATA Reyes in action.

IBC pulls out . . . Pormagra 42

the coverage of the PBA games during the past months.

"Time can are spectate long drink down blindsiders (If we are not being paid.)" Pre and survives like that," said a high-ranking IBC-13 official of the station's abrupt move to stop airing the games.

The source said MBS-4, through its financial arm, Basic Sport Corporation, had issued 22 post-dated checks worth P15.5 million each to take care of IBC-13's ad time slots.

MBS-4 now the TV rights cha year mainly through its proposed for simultaneous coverage with IBC-13 but ran into problems after both stations failed to have big sponsors to support the games.

Sources said MBS-4 now owes the PBA some P70 million to overdue payments for TV rights.

Russell sank the go-ahead free throw with a minute left, 89-84, and triggered several defensive stops that halted the Tigers' six-game winning streak.

The Tigers wrapped up their elimination round campaign by absorbing a second setback in 13 outings in the Bandera, after entering unbeaten in games for a 10-1 record.

In the one-on-one competition, Ali Ibrahim of TAR 'N TAU dumped Gleffo Tony Dela Cruz, 38-6, to barge into the finals.

Scores

RED BULL 89—Russell 18, Ingate 16, Sta. Ana 15, Miller 11, Pennisi 8, Villanueva 8, Ingate 4, Jones 4, Ochavez 2, Ira 2, Simonelis 2, Jumpers 2.

UNIA-UNA 84—McGhee 34, Gerard 15, Arbitrio 13, Manuel 10, Lara 8, Reporter 7, Moore 5, Jones 4, Arevalo 2, Hontiveros 2

Quarters: 45-33, 44-42, 67-65, 89-84

The Beatles of Japan

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

WHEN you hear Beethoven's Fur Elise and you don't get excited (wow), I guess you are classical. That piece is all you need to lift up your soul when things go awry. Sometimes, we count from 1 to 10 to calm us down. Fur Elise is all but only 3 minutes and 14 seconds, which is more than enough to lift than beleaguered soul to heavenly bliss.

Now get this. How about Bell Does Beethoven by The Beatles?

You are not only obsessed if you can't appreciate that. You must be crazy, k-jeh.

I heard that song again, recorded live only a while back. By a group calling itself The Silver Beats, which performs nightly at The Cavern in the bustling Shibuya district of Tokyo. I heard that group while in the company of distinguished ladies like Aida Sevilla Mendoza and Anny Blaza, and celebrity gentlemen like Jimsy Gentin, Artie Lopez, Randy Santos, Jojo Nones, Dax Morallos, Boog Magsajo, Popong Baldovino, and Ronnie Asuncion, and certified Beatlemaniacs Ding Macasio, Bonnie B. Santos, Vince Reyes and Danny Isla. I told you those folks and guys wouldn't believe their ears, if not their eyes, while watching The Silver Beats perform. They were almost one in saying as if they were watching The Beatles perform live all over again. The Silver Beats are Japan's version of the Mop Tops.

Randy Santos: "They can really do Beatle stuff. I am amazed."

Said Artie: "Thanks, Al, for bringing us here."

Said Ariel: "I might yet drop ITC for The Beatles' when I get home."

And I know: Ya, listen up. Now I know why you're some to this place four nights already."

Dennis J, the time-tested spark-plug behind Toyota's aggressive marketing thrusts, threw that second wide me. Don't be surprised, though. Like the rest of us, he adores The Beatles like Mercedes and Vivas. In fact for years now, the four of us have been a cooking with this idea of putting up our own pub: we're going in call it The Pub Four. All tunes will be by The Beatles. Our theme will be names for the band, which will perform not just seven but eight days a week at the club, include Boys, Help, Wait and Girl. Rule is not so there's already a group by that name that plays regularly in Boni, Nevada. Harry's Hardart Cafe performs live and each time he speaks about the group, he comes with admiration.

"No other Beatle are can beat the Brits," said Danny I.

Every family has known about The Cavern. One can't falter about being a Beatlemaniac. He'll be astonished or easily by a Pub Four fanatic.

Kopponig's The Cavern is a replica of what was in Mathew, ever-so-busy pub in Liverpool, England, with the same name. It was at The Cavern's that The Beatles had their early beginning. In short, Beatlemania. That desire era was that changed the face of rock and roll forever, was born there.

OK we jog, hike or brisk-walk to keep body and heart fit.

But we need also to jog our memory if only to keep those favorites constantly alert, if not to remind, did the words of Bell Does Beethoven. It was one of Hitchcock's early hits while he was still known in The Quiet Beatle at the height of Beatlemania in the 60s.

The Silver Beats are too humble to call The Beatles that you can't find even the smallest of deviation from a Beatle sound when they perform. The results goes to Rajo, "Rajo" Hosia. Ricky, 32, who spurs the remarkable Beats has also like the four members of The Silver Beats, memorized the group's only six months ago.

"It took me quite some time to find the exact sound that all the four Beatles made to change the world of music," said Ricky. "Sometimes appearances convinced much that I was only look at our version of John Lennon. Doesn't he look exactly like John Lennon?"

To tell you frankly, fellas, from Hideman Mitsuchi of The Silver Beats is a glamorous of John Lennon. Put him alongside Julian Lennon and Sean Ono Lennon and I bet you, you'll say all three are brothers sired by John Lennon.

And you know what? It's Hideman Mitsuchi sings, moves and emotes that guitar like John Lennon. Mimics Paul and his three pub mates—Sir, as George Harrison said, sometimes never knows.

Do I hear Yeoman say "Yeah, yeah, yeah!"?

RP back in chess map

GRANDMASTER candidate Mark Paragua edged Filipino grandmaster Rony Villamayor on RP No. 3 in the world ranking released yesterday by the World Chess Federation (FIDE).

It was the first time in three months that the country was included in the list after the National Chess Federation of the Philippines settled its annual dues with FIDE.

The 19-year old former chess prodigy vaulted ahead of Villamayor with an 2523 of 2511. Villamayor had a 2477 FIDE.

Bangkok Open champion GM Joey Antonio remained the country's No. 1 with his 2522 ELO. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Fabregas, Ramos win

CARLOS Fabregas stopped seventh Immen with a 76 twist at Hole 4th Ramos made the closer by shooting a 59 in the seventh 2nd TEEL Open at the ninth course of Canlubang.

Fabregas, playing in Class C, collected the lowest gross among those who send all those he regular tees while Ramos, a division winner in the US Irish World tourney in Florida last August, beat his opponent from the special tees.

Miguel Tabuena, another standout of the RP campaign in the US, bagged his second straight crown by winning boys Class D of the tourney presented by DigiDeal and organized by The Junior Golfers League in cooperation with the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines.

In the girls division, Rosalyn Cheng-ing and Gelsen Dandog both scored 108 in topping Class A and B, respectively while Cyan Bridgett (Class C), Sies Ali Farooq (Class D) and Felicia Medalla (Class E) taking the other titles.

Completing the boys winners were IG Gutierrez in Class A, Mikio Tee who beat defending overall champion Mikee Lacsina by three in Class B and Anthony Tee in Class C.

TSGI president Roy Cayabyab and organizing committee head Raul Lachica handed over the prizes to the winners.

Davao rules Palaro

Pormagra 42

Lanon, 11-0.

RBB conceded itself by posting the most outstanding athletes in the secondary level.

Cassidy swimmer and 14-year-old Monique Bernadette Lozada who won six gold medals in the 200m butterfly and medley, 100m backstroke, 200m backstroke, 200m freestyle and 400m medley) was the runaway choice in the girls' division.

Ateneo Cabi, 16, was the top male athlete after he swooshes in the 200m freestyle, 200m butterfly and in two relays (400m and 4x50 medley).

In secondary athletics, Johnson

Final Medal Tally			
Delegation	G	S	B
Davao	42	28	24
C. Luzon	38	36	35
R. Mindanao	33	28	25
Cordillera	31	35	27
Caraga	17	15	15
Mindanao	12	14	17
Iloilo	12	14	17
Caraga	6	4	10
Cordillera	6	5	14
Pilipinas	6	5	13
Caraga	6	5	13
Davao	6	5	13
Caraga	6	5	13
Caraga	6	5	13
Mindanao	6	5	13
Caraga	6	5	13

Lacandola of Central Luzon captured the most medals after adding the 100m, 200m and 400m individual medleys.

Albert Tolentino of RBB also broke the girls' side with records in the 800m, 1,500m and 3,000m.

Organizers bid for Vice Governor Quilinorcon Chua's post expressed delight over the conduct of the Games despite pre-game apprehensions by several regions over Lanao del Norte's peace and order situation.

"I think we have proven not only our hospitality but also our capability to provide security to all participants in the Palaro," said Dimaporo, whose province is also bidding to co-host the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Falcons clinch crown

ADAMSON humbled Far Eastern University, 70-76, yesterday to salvage the Singapore basketball championship at the Sultanang La Salle in the La Salle University Gymnasium.

The Falcons posted 23 points to lead the Silverio, Kenneth Bono added 14, while Jojo Faver and Mark Abello chipped in 11 each.

Jay Aseos registered for the Tamaraws with 14 markers, while Jeff Chan and Ivo Yabut had 13 each.

The Falcon reached the final by downing St. Benilde, 73-68, while the Tamaraws advanced after whipping Assumption Convention, 91-79.

"I am just really happy. I am thankful to the boys for letting me coach them," said winning coach Leigh Tolibo, who bagged his first title as a coach.

Badminton Executive Cup slated

THE FIRST Nevein Executive Cup badminton tournament get under way Nov. 15-16 and 22-23 at the Rizal Memorial Pasong Tamo in Makati City, for more details, contact Tito R. Aldis of Ebony Achers at 0917-7961815 or e-mail glenayerena.RD@yahoo.com.

Backing the meet are Sportsdown, Asics, Head, Li-Ning, Dunlop and Dunplillo, McDonalds, Mabuhay, Dencio's and Sweets.

THOSE INTERESTED TO JOIN US FOR REFUND OF INVESTMENT AGAINST UNIVERSAL LEISURE CLUB/CORP. MAY CONTACT MR. JANE AT TEL#5314671-76

BUSINESS

John Raulf D. Manuela
Assistant Editor Carmie S. Makinano

Gov't debt stock up 17% to ₱3.16T

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT'S outstanding debt as of August swelled by 17.2 percent to ₱3.158 trillion from ₱2.695 trillion in the same period last year due to the massive borrowings of the Macapagal administration to previous months.

Department of Finance data showed that on a month-on-month basis, however, the level of debt in August was only slightly higher than the ₱3.14 trillion in July.

"As early as July, the government has already exceeded its 99.9-billion debt stock projection for the whole year.

The obligations of the national government accounted for about 60 percent of the country's total debt stock of ₱5.181 trillion last year.

The government's debt is be-

ing blamed for the ₱69.74-billion in contingent liabilities, representing the amount of guarantees extended by the state to loans of government agencies and private businesses.

Reserve contingent liabilities may become actual debts of the state if the covered agencies or companies will fail to pay their obligations.

The level of contingent liabilities has increased substantially this year.

During the eight-month period, debt that central monetary authorities took the most ₱44 billion in contingent liabilities, representing the amount of guarantees extended by the state to loans of government agencies and private businesses.

Domestic borrowings grew by ₱240.675 billion or 17.7 percent to ₱1.607 trillion in August against ₱1.408 billion a year ago and by ₱4.18 billion or 0.6 percent from ₱1.647 trillion in the previous month.

As of August, the foreign debt component also increased by ₱213.07 billion or 20.6 percent year-on-year to ₱1.021 trillion ($27.32 billion) from ₱1.287 billion last year and by ₱8.083 billion or 0.5 percent from ₱1.493 billion a month ago.

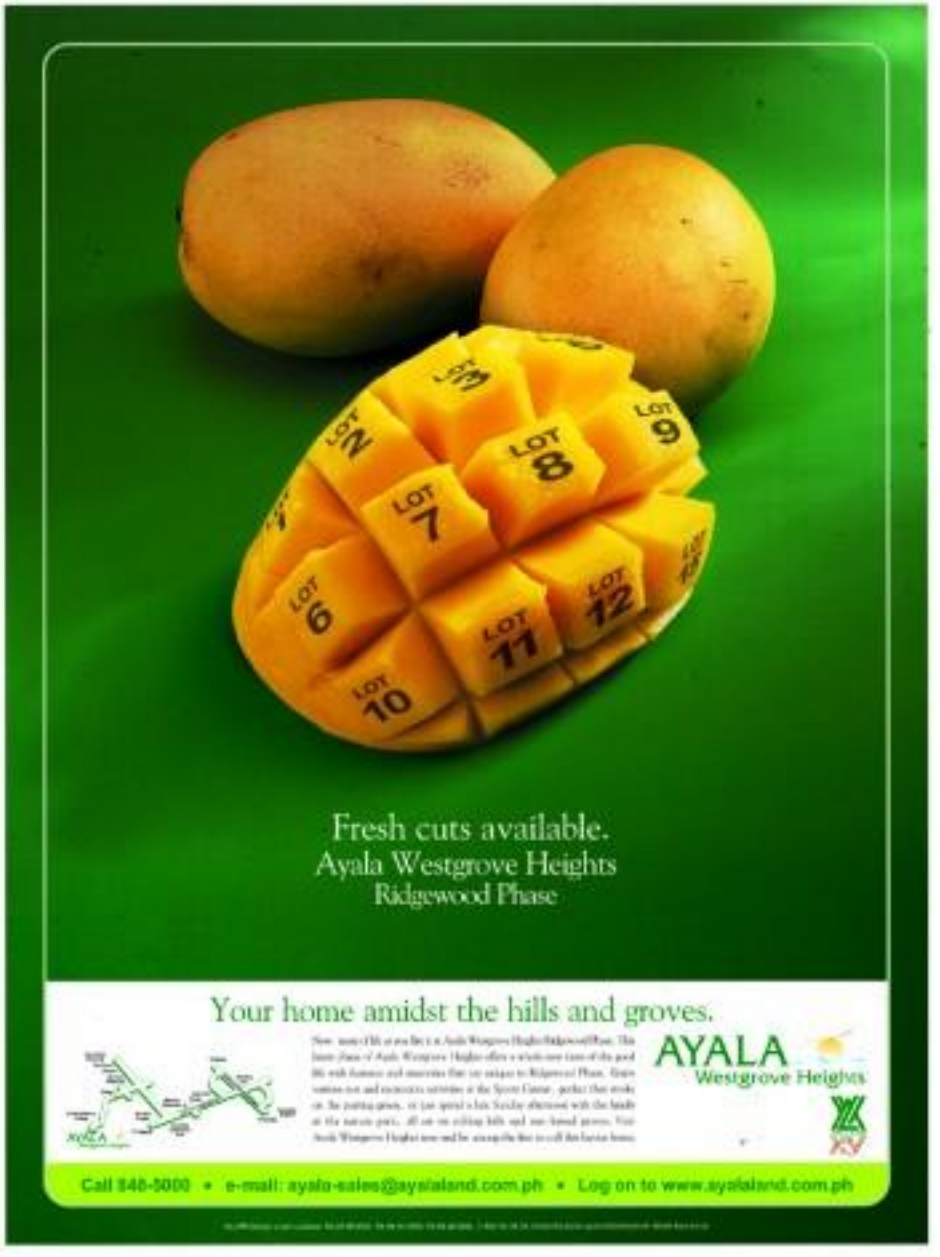
A weaker peso in August, averaging at 54.95 to $1 compared with 53.8 to $1 a year ago, further blamed the level of the government's external obligations.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the consolidated outstanding debt of the government was expected to swell to about ₱7 trillion in the next five to seven years before the government could start bringing it down to a more manageable level.

He stressed, however, that the country was not in the brink of a debt crisis because almost 90 percent of the country's obligations were to nations in more than five years and only 10 percent were bill due in a year.

"The total debt stock could go up but we also expect the economy to perform better. Once we generate enough surplus, we will be able to start bringing down the debt level substantially," said the finance chief.

The country's rating public debt was one of the factors that influenced the decision of Stan-



IMPRESSIVE Q3 PROFIT

Meralco seen hitting 2003 sales growth target

IMPORTED WHEELCHAIR

COMFORT WHEELCHAIR

FAR EAST MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

By Bernad W. Dominguez

THE MANILA Electric Co., the largest power retailer in the Philippines, on Wednesday revised its sales growth target for 2003 to an annual 4.3 percent from 3.2 percent.

"It's just really the strength in the third quarter. It seems to be sustainable," Meralco chief finance officer Eugenio Icasiano told reporters.

Meralco said on Monday its third-quarter profit doubled from the same period of 2002, helped by its first rate hike in nine years.

The utility, which supplies electricity to four million households and businesses in and around Manila, earned P5.5 billion in July to September, compared with P2.01 billion a year earlier.

Meralco said its sales volume rose 5.1 percent to 17,744 million kilowatt hours in the first nine months from 16,886 million a year earlier. For the third quarter, sales volume rose an annual 6.6 percent.

Meralco, however, reported a 14.67 percent decline in its cash balance for the first six months, from P7.87 billion to P6.72 billion, due mainly to its refund to customers.

"Our cash balance is expected to deteriorate further by December and the next few years when Meralco shells out even bigger amounts for the refund," Meralco chief finance officer Icasiano said.

Meralco's financial report for the third quarter showed a payout of P1.72 billion to cover the first phase of its refund.

The refund covered customers that used up to 100 kilowatt hours in April 2003.

Meralco is in its second phase of the refund, which would cost the company some P4.6 billion. Phase 3 will kick off in January next year, costing P4.9 billion and the final phase will cost P1.8.6 billion in customers claims.

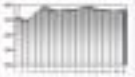
Meralco shelled out P15.44 billion to cash during the first nine months, including P7.45 billion in debt payments, P4.77 billion in capital expenditures and P1.22 billion in system loss.

System loss expenses refer to the sum of electricity that is lost through technical faults in Meralco's distribution system and pilferage, which is beyond that cap that it is allowed to recover from its customers. MORE on page 3 from Business

MERALCO'S third quarter profit doubled this year, helped by its first rate hike in nine years.

Currencies

Stock Market



Stocks end higher; SM Prime leads

PNB to issue notes worth $140M

By Elena R. Torijos

THE PHILIPPINE National Bank, the country's sixth largest bank, yesterday said it would issue up to $140 million in subordinated notes next month to meet the required 10 percent minimum capital adequacy ratio set by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, PNB said the indicative yield of the planned ten-year debt issue, which should have a tenor of 10 years, ranged from 6 percent to 6.5 percent.

The universal bank, equally controlled by the government and the group of tobacco magnate Lucio Tan, has tapped JP Morgan Securities Ltd. to the sole arranger and bookbuilder of the issue.

The notes will be listed on the Singapore Stock Exchange.

If the notes issue pushes through next month, PNB would be the fourth among the large listed banks to raise the two-capital through a subordinated debt issue this year.

Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co., Bankilde PO Bank and Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. all issued subordinated notes to boost their capital base.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said that the issuance of subordinated notes qualifying as tier two capital would encourage the banks to sell their non-performing assets even at a loss as the additional capital would provide enough room to write off some of the bad assets.

PNB has around P75 billion in non-performing assets, consisting of real and other property owned or acquired and non-performing loans. The bank plans to sell part of the assets to a special purpose vehicle that would qualify for tax incentives.

In 2003, banks in the country level stood at 30 percent of its total loan portfolio as of Sept. 30, which meant that one out of two borrowers fell behind on their debt payments.

PNB last week announced that it swung to a net profit of P127 million in the first nine months of this year from a net loss of P1.02 billion in the same period last year. With reports from Reuters

Gov't . . .

(Continued from B-1)

dent & Poor's and Fitch Ratings in downgrade their outlook on Philippine borrowings.

In 2004, the government will have to settle P542.1 billion in debt, up P114.8 billion or 27.4 percent from the debt servicing requirement this year of P425.7 billion.

Interest payments next year were placed at P207.3 billion, up 17.7 percent from this year's P176.1 billion. Principal payments next year will be higher by 28.8 percent or P75.7 billion at P270.7 billion, from this year's P195 billion in 2003.

DISCLOSURES

MARTINI Ltd.'s was elected director of Philippine First Insurance.

MANILA PE Resources Corp. declared a cash dividend of Canadian $0.01 per share in favor of shareholders of record as of Nov. 11 and will be payable on Dec. 15.

MEATSTAGE Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 29, 10 a.m. at the Hidalgo 680, Frontline Room of Holiday Inn Makati, Manila, Pinay City. Only stockholders of record as of Oct. 27 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

THE TWO-YEAR lock-up period on the 10 billion shares of Rico Mining and Industrial Corp. issued to Asian Coop and Discovery Mines Inc. expires today, Oct. 30.

MABUHAY Vinyl Corp. disclosed that it has already taken over certain executives to address the spillage of caustic soda from its leased tank in Davao, Batangas.

BUSCC Corp. appointed Jacqueline Ivy as financial controller and assistant budget for the company's intended bank listing. It will also serve as issue manager for the listing of the company's new shares and first underwriter for its possible stock rights offering. *Compiled by Marissa B. Taliano, PSE Research*

BUSINESS

Political woes drag down peso value

By Clarissa S. Ocampo

SKELETONS other factors, political concentrations alone have dragged down the value of the peso by 5 to 6 to the dollar, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said.

This means that without the political concerns, the peso should be trading at only about 51.50 to $1, and not at more than 56.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said that during "less interesting times," the peso was trading at only 51 before the Thaksin Archat bond, the peso was considered very competitive, he said.

Since political and power and safety concerns started dominating the financial market, the differential widened to P5.6 to P6.6. The Thai baht has been trading below 40 to a dollar.

Meanwhile the peso rebounded yesterday to 55.24 to $1, from 56.26 on Tuesday, the gap between the local currency and the dollar remained substantial.

The peso is the worst performing currency in the region on a year-to-date basis.

It was, however, one of the gainers in yesterday's trading after it recovered 0.4 percent of the value previously lost.

Turnover was lower at $277.4 million than $313.3 million on Tuesday when traders saw the BSP selling as much as $50 million at the open market. Businessmen said the BSP did not sell dollars yesterday.

The baht yesterday closed at 39.92 to a dollar. The Thai currency traded closer to 40 to $1.

"Clearly, all these developments have contributed to a more expansive dollar for us, with our paying a political premium for the risks. Our normal differential with the baht is P2.6 and now it is more than P3.6," said the central bank chief at the sidelines of the Bank Marketing Association of the Philippines meeting yesterday.

Still, Buenaventura is confident that the peso will rebound to the 54 to $1 level by the end of the year in anticipation of stronger dollar remittances from offshore Filipino workers.

However, some currency analysts see no particular factor that can trigger the peso recovery.

Some market players see the peso losing P56 by year-end and P57 before the May 2004 elections.

"We cannot discount our GDP performance which is stronger than what we originally anticipated and this has helped to offset the drawdown in reserves," he said.

Buenaventura said the Philippines was beset with one recurring event after another.

FILIPINOS queued to sell their US dollars and other foreign currencies at a money changer shop in Manila Intl. Tuesday when the peso dropped over to all-time low as it traded 55.24 to the US dollar. The exercise is the controversy over attempts to impeach Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide on allegations of graft increasing concerns over the rising political risks in the country. —AP

LGUs urged to issue anti-piracy rules

By Michelle V. Rosca

LOCAL governments were urged to pass an ordinance that would actively enforce the law on the distribution of counterfeit products in the market to help the government in its efforts to halve the industry ravaged from the fastest losses' watch list of intellectual property rights violators.

The Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement Action Band (IPREAB), a group composed of various government enforcement agencies and private business groups, has come up with a model ordinance that imposes penalties and individuals found distributing fake products.

Emma Francisco, director general of the Intellectual Property Office, said the passage of such an ordinance could be one of the factors that could reinstate the EU Trade Representative Office to remove the Philippines from the USTR watchlist.

Under the suggested ordinance, a local government's licensing division will be given the power to inspect operations of any establishment and to cancel business permits should it find the establishment selling fake products. The model ordinance also provides for the penalties that will be imposed on violators.

Home, Sky Cable expected to complete consolidation soon

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH the recent signing of a debt restructuring agreement with its creditors, Philippine Home Cable Holdings Inc. expressed optimism that a complete consolidation with SkyCable Central (CEP) Inc. could take place anytime soon.

"We are committed to the consolidation of the cable television businesses of Home Cable and Sky Cable through Beyond Cable Holdings Inc.), and expect that the final steps of the consolidation process will work out smoothly as planned," Home Cable president Ray Espinosa said in a statement yesterday.

Home Cable and SkyCable, in accordance with a master consolidation agreement signed in 2002, had started consolidating their operations under the Beyond Cable ecosystem.

However, the restructuring of P2.3 billion in combined debts posed a major hurdle to achieving a full consolidation.

After months of negotiations, the Beyond Cable consortium on Oct. 27 finally signed a memorandum of agreement with majority of Home Cable and SkyCable's creditors, paving the way for an actual debt restructuring agreement as well as the complete consolidation of the two firms.

Equitable PCI Bank, Bank of the Philippine Islands and the Development Bank of the Philippines have the biggest loan exposures in the two cable operators.

Espinosa said the full consolidation of the two entities would make both companies more efficient and stable in the long term.

As soon as Beyond Cable's debts are restructured, a third-party investor can come in to help raise the P30 million that the consortium earlier firm intends to offer several programming to its subscribers.

"The equity call is P30 million. All shareholders that will want to participate can put in their money. The remainder will the shareholder by the new investor," SKYCable chair Reginio Lopez II said in an earlier interview.

He said there was already an investor that would come in as soon as the cable firm's debts were restructured.

The P30 million that existing and new shareholders needed to put in would be used to energize the cable firm's program signals as well as to purchase decoder boxes for its subscribers.

LIFESTYLE tastes

Magnifico gelato!

This Italian treat has less fat compared to ice cream, uses no preservatives and is perfect for lactose-intolerant Pinoys

Text by Anna A. Jarabara
Photos by Jim Ocon-Punsalan

"I LIKE gelato because it is something particularly Italian, like pizza and pasta," says Pegliucci chef Maurizio Gibillini, who has been making gelato since the early '70s.

In those days gelato shops opened only during summertime and handed out daring relatives. When bored young Gibillini set owners into the gelato business was the dream of blissful months-long vacations—whipping up gelato in the summer and taking it easy the rest of the year.

Gibillini comes from a family of bakers in Milan, Italy, where up to this day his family still produces bread, pizza and pastry. At Pegliucci Ristorante at G/F The Podium, are surprisingly also serves excellent pizza and pasta.

When it comes to gelato, however, make no mistake: It is not

PEGLIUCCI gelato melt more slowly than typical ice cream, since they are practically free of air bubbles.

FILM MAKER Mauricio Gibilisi, the man behind gelato-in-a-cup success, won't believe (but it's healthy, he says) it.

Magnifico gelato!

THERE are over 30 flavors, but only 16 are displayed on a given time.

ice cream. Gibilisi insists—and passionately so—as this hot, icy dessert was invented yesterday (by an American)... Gelato was invented before Jesus Christ. That's a true story," he says.

Indeed, the earliest mention of gelato is in the Bible, when Abraham ate (you-know-who's) host's offering of cold goat's milk. In Italy, gelato had beginnings similar to our halo-halo, says Gibilisi. Ice was scraped from snowcaps, then mixed with honey and fruits. He says other icons in Europe in the 11th century, using the ones mountains found today in the Philippines to produce "dirty" ice cream.

Healthier

Gelato is more nutritious than their American counterpart, says Gibilisi. It has less fat content—only 3-2/3-4 percent compared to ice cream's 10 percent. It uses no preservatives and is purified. Its texture is silkier. Heavy.

And there's a selection of sugar-free flavors made of corn and artificial sweetener that are just as good.

"Ice cream is made of cream. Gelato is made of skimmed milk. That's why it has less fat content. Instead of cream (milk). And blend that with water and sugar," he says.

A hundred grams of gelato contains between 300-350 calories, he says, like a glass of Ultramel milk. Compare that to a slice of Max's chocolate fudge cake, packs a whopping 400 calories, equivalent to a bag of chips.

All the health talk, however, shouldn't discourage the "no sugar, no fat, no good" diabetic. Pagkain pa gelato are amazingly rich, thick and creamy—even without the cream...and consider than the leading gourmet ice cream.

His secret? "The skill of the people doing it and the equipment," he says. "If two chefs are given the same ingredients to make carbonara, both will never produce the same taste even if they follow the same recipe."

Compliment him on his delicious gelato and he gets that sparkle in his eyes before he exclaims: "Classic!"

E-mail the author at agustin.rodriguez@yahoo.com.ph

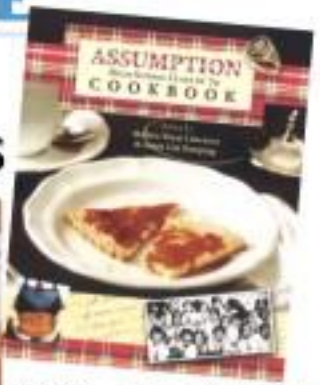
"WE [Italians] like to be picky. We don't just visit a favorite gelato shop. Once or twice. Horrible? We go back, that's all," says gelato maker Gibilisi.

GROWING Quezon City is a celebrates Mardi Gras Festival. Gracing the streets of the City of Smiles are elaborately decorated floats depicting the Philippines' rich history and culture. Participants from Brgy. Pasong Tamo, Barangay Commonwealth, Barangay Payatas, Barangay Bagong Silangan, Barangay Batasan Hills, Barangay Holy Spirit, Barangay Tandang Sora, Barangay Culiat, Barangay Sauyo, Barangay Talipapa, Barangay Novaliches Proper, Barangay Gulod Novaliches, Barangay Sta. Lucia, Barangay Sta. Monica, Barangay Bagbag, Barangay Kaligayahan, Barangay Nagkaisang Nayon, Barangay North Fairview, Barangay Greater Lagro, Barangay San Agustin, Barangay Gen. T. De Leon, Barangay Bahay Toro, Barangay Sangandaan, Barangay Tatalon, Barangay Veterans Village, Barangay Damayang Lagi, Barangay Paltok, Barangay Pasong Putik Proper, Barangay Apolonio Samson, Barangay Baesa, Barangay Balong Bato, Barangay Bagong Lipunan ng Crame, Barangay Kaunlaran, Barangay Mariana, Barangay Obrero, Barangay Old Balara, Barangay Pansol, Barangay Payatas, Barangay Phil-Am, Barangay Project 6, Barangay Ramon Magsaysay, Barangay San Antonio, Barangay San Bartolome, Barangay Santa Cruz, Barangay Santa Lucia, Barangay Santa Monica, Barangay Sauyo, Barangay Talipapa, Barangay Tandang Sora, Barangay Unang Sigaw, Barangay Vasra, Barangay Veterans Village, Barangay West Kamias, Barangay White Plains, Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, Barangay Bagong Silangan, Barangay Batasan Hills, Barangay Commonwealth, Barangay Culiat, Barangay Damayang Lagi, Barangay Greater Lagro, Barangay Gulod Novaliches, Barangay Holy Spirit, Barangay Kaligayahan, Barangay Nagkaisang Nayon, Barangay North Fairview, Barangay Pasong Tamo, Barangay Payatas, Barangay Sangandaan, Barangay Sauyo, Barangay Talipapa, Barangay Tandang Sora, Barangay Unang Sigaw, Barangay Vasra, Barangay Veterans Village, Barangay West Kamias, Barangay White Plains

Kitchen Rescue by Reggie Aspiras will appear next Thursday

LIFESTYLE

New cookbook from Assumption jubilarians



By Marvin E. Sandoval
Contributor

AT THE ASSUMPTION Colleges, the alumnae awaken with renewed energy and excitement every time a class anniversary is forthcoming.

The Walds, a traditional Assumption program of songs, dances and many speeches, is the highlight of every reunion held in the campus grounds, either in this location or Mandaluyong. This special day of bonding is called Old Girls Day.

While alumnae traditionally do dances and other special activities, a number of batches have come up with novel projects to celebrate their reunions.

Isabel "Bingle" Baron Perez (HS '54) was the first to bring dance numbers, coming up instead with a perfectly bound cookbook with each classmate contributing a recipe.

Class HS '77 then did a second Assumption cookbook called "Food for Thought." It contained 100 recipes from appetizer to dessert, with personal anecdotes about the food from each alumna/classmate.

Finally, when it was her batch's turn to become silver jubilarians, Beatriz Puyat-Limcaoco, taking after mom Brigida, supported teaming up with another Assumption cookbook. With Annie Lim-Kampeng, she again collected recipes from classmates all over the globe.

This book, called the "Assumption High School Batch '79 cookbook," a finally-all-the-press and will be formally launched by November.

Here are a few choice recipes from the latest Assumption cookbook:

MAURYC Puyat-Limcaoco and Annie Lim-Kampeng

The pride and joy of High School Batch '79 will take its place on the Velada table on Nov. 8

Ah Ma's meatballs

Gigi Gotiaoco Tee

Our old family favorite from the days when the whole clan would gather at Ah Ma and Ang Kong's home for the Sunday meal.)

½ kg minced pork
½ c tapioca pearls or potato flour
1 whole onion, chopped
½ tsp durkee powder
1/8 tsp black pepper
salt to taste

Mix all ingredients well and make into bite-size balls. Deep fry till golden brown. Drain and serve hot.

Note: You can use Lambie flour or durkee M-cornstarch for the tapioca powder.

Karen's Fudge Brownie

Karen Garcia-Litre

(From friend Elizabeth Jackson, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, who swears this is the best brownie recipe she's tried.)

1 c unsalted butter, melted
¾ c cocoa powder
2 c sugar
4 large eggs
1 c all-purpose flour
2 tsp vanilla extract
½ tsp salt
2 c (12 ounces) chocolate chips
1 c chopped walnuts

Preheat oven at 350°F and grease a 13" x 9½" baking pan. Pour melted butter into large mixing bowl. Add the cocoa powder and stir well until blended. Add the sugar and mix well. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add the vanilla, salt and the flour and stir until just mixed together. Do not over beat. Stir in chocolate chips and walnuts.

Spread into prepared baking pan and bake for 20-30 minutes. Let cool and cut into 24 squares. Can freeze well, wrapped in plastic.

Mustard Glazed Corned Beef

Lisa Lorenzo Ng

(From a recipe from Mary Jo Cuino Lorenzo, HS '55, compiled as she was battling with cancer because she was not one to be idle even as she was confined.)

1 (4.5-pound) beef brisket
1 medium onion, halved
1 celery stalk, cut up
3 garlic cloves
¼ cup peppercorns
water
1/3 cracked brown sugar
2 tbsp prepared mustard
2 tbsp ketchup

Put brisket in casserole and add water enough to cover meat. Add onion, celery, garlic and peppercorns, and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat and simmer until tender (about three hours).

Preheat oven to 350°F. Cut meat into slices. Arrange overlapping slices in an ovenproof

SEARED Tuna with Mango Ponzu Sauce

SUSHI Stack

THE #1 Special

Variety in fusion

SUSHI chef Roland Landico

FEDERICO Carmona, pub owner, wants to be on food

Text by Charles V Mistal
Photos by Rony Hendiola

IN A VERY competitive industry where six to seven out of 10 new restaurants fold up—or repackage—after only a short period, surviving two years is remarkable; and getting past the third is short of phenomenal.

Manila Diner are tikim, admonishes chef Roland Landico. "They try whatever is new," he adds. "Some restaurants have fantastic menus and people go there, but the bucket part is keeping the quality."

The young Landico is the guest chef at the Wasabi Bistro and Sake Bar (tel. 8404223; 7520032). He creates new dishes to boost the already extensive menu of the Japanese fusion restaurant.

Euro techniques, Japanese ingredients

"It's a collaboration," explains Landico. He's referring to the support and trust the owners of the four-year-old restaurant have given him, and his efforts at helping generate renewed interest in Wasabi.

Landico trained at the Culinary Institute of America in New York. He worked briefly in France and Australia before coming home three years ago to set up a catering business. It was in one of his gigs where he met Wasabi part-owner Federico Carmona, who was quite impressed with the young chef's cooking.

With over 100 dishes on its regular menu, Wasabi clearly thrives on variety. Japanese chef Shigeru Kimura mans the kitchen.

"I'm familiar with the kind of cooking [in Wasabi]," says Landico. "It's the same as my style [which involves] experimenting and mixing of different cuisines, as it wasn't hard for someone me to work here[.]"

For a clientele so united as Wasabi's seems—businessmen, expatriates, families—Landico created dishes that would appeal to both local and foreign palates.

He uses Japanese ingredients, but his techniques is European, as in the Chilean Sea Bass rubbed with Asian spices and drizzled with orange miso emulsion; the Tamarind-glazed Boneless Pork Tenderloin; the Grilled Squid Stuffed with Saffron Risotto; the Chicken in Sake Rosemary Dijon Sauce; and the Seared Tuna with Mango Ponzu Sauce.

"Most Filipinos go for this kind of food because Japanese cuisine has a lot of sweet and sour combinations, which are familiar to the Filipino palate," says Landico. "Filipinos travel more, so they want to taste here what they have outside [the country]."

Focus on food

When it opened three years ago, Wasabi promised basic menu in terms of big value by market. Carmona wouldn't change the notion that Wasabi is a bar more than a restaurant. Although it still holds "Vibe Fridays" for weekend revelers, Wasabi's focus is on the food. "If your food is good, people will come back," he says. "It's not just the branding and packaging." Wasabi's come-on is consistency in quality of food, he adds.

"Restaurants become popular because of celebrities that go there," says Landico. "But business also dies because they don't always eat. They just go there to be seen, have a drink or two, or see [the]."

While celebrity sightings may be good for publicity, "it's better to have a low-profile restaurant where people go just for the food."

Landico has a high regard for his patron. "Wasabi is hands-on. He thinks of everything...the menu, the operations, the accounting side. He has turned into a great knowledge of food. Many restaurants fail because restaurateurs are only there at night making drinks and not doing the dirty work." There are also chefs who are only there for show, he adds. "In reality, they don't even cook."

While the Manila food scene has changed dramatically, he notes only very few restaurateurs emphasize the chef. "Restaurateurs see it's to be this category. It's either Chinese, Italian, fusion... Very few have on the chef, his style... We need more of that here because I believe we have fantastic chefs."

But, he says, a restaurant is a business and must make money. This is the biggest challenge for any chef.

Success requires good systems operation and organization, he adds. "As long as you keep serving good food and provide good service, people go back to your restaurant, regardless if you're expensive or cheap."

Wasabi is located at 7912 Makati Ave., Olympic Courtyard Solaris Building, beside Manila Peninsula Hotel, Makati City.

E-mail the author at cmistal@inquirer.com.ph

GRILLED Squid Stuffed with Saffron Risotto

MINTO Box (Beef Tenderloin Teppanyaki)

RAINBOW Roll

WASABI's menu-as is its consistency in the quality of its food.

New cookbook . . .

From page 11

platters. Mix sugar, mustard and ketchup together, and spread on top and on brownie mixture above. Bake for 20 minutes till glaze is browned.

Asian mix

Steamed Cabbage. Slice two heads of cabbage, heat ¼ c salad oil till very hot. Stir in cabbage and 1 tsp salt and ½ tsp sugar. Stir 5-10 minutes.

Orange Baby Chicken. Heat 1/3 c orange marmalade, 1 tbsp orange juice, 1 tsp chopped parsley, 1/8 tsp salt. Add 1 tbl mince sauce if whole bird is serving.

Pochole's Paheda

Martha Sanchez-Lucero

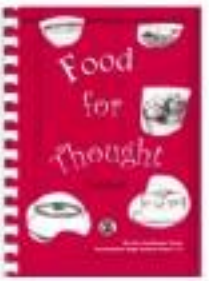
(My dad, "the late Monsour gourmet"—as we like to call him—has taken to cooking in the last 5-6 years. Next to ESPN, the Lifestyle channel's Food TV is high on his remote! Among our favorites is his ex-cellent Pahada—similar to our Pinoy adobo. My brother and my husband always vie to finish off half a pot between them! As far as we are concerned, our Sunday lunches are never complete without it!)

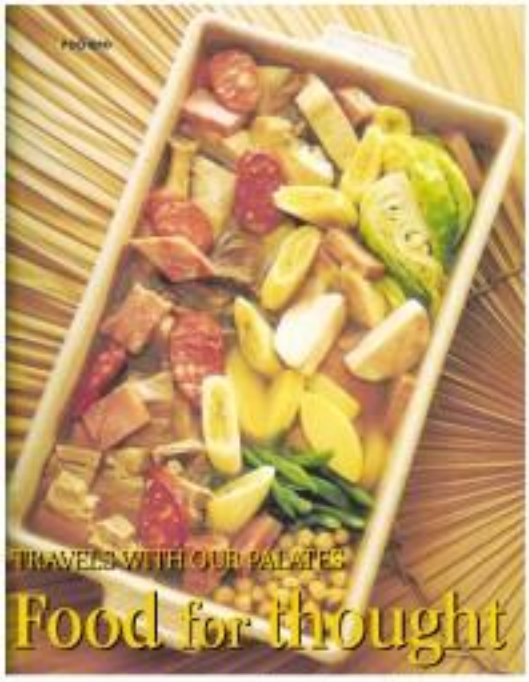
1 pack white beans
2½ (12) c water
4 stalks celery, chopped thinly
4 stalks onion bulbs, chopped thinly
random bacon, cut in chunks
3 pcs chorizo de bilbao, preferably Blanca El Rey or Goiti, cut into 1-inch pcs.
5 pcs morcilla (blood sausage), cut into 1-inch slices
Orange carrots, cut into chunks
1 chicken breast/boullion cube

Soak the white beans in water overnight. Put the celery, onion leeks, random bacon and chorizo in a large saucepan. Add some water, just enough to cover the meat and vegetables. Bring to a boil, then simmer until some tasa bubbles yellow in color.

To the cooking pot, add white beans, boullion cube and the rest of the water. Bring to a boil then let simmer. When beans are half-cooked, add the morcillas and carrots. You may add more water if soup becomes dry and the beans are not yet cooked. Simmer until beans are soft and the soup thickens, stirring occasionally. The bean soup must be creamy and not watery. Serve with hot French bread or hot rice. Sprinkle each serving with olive oil and red wine vinegar.

The Assumption cookbooks are available at the admin office of Assumption College, San Lorenzo Village. Call 8913161 or 8923580.





LATO

By Nina and Erwin Ekdahl
Contributors

Ever thought about the origins of names given to food? It can be both fascinating and edifying

A PETALUDE lunch with friends on a lazy Sunday recently consisted of a salad of lato (seaweed) with tomatoes and onions, *empanada* that someone had made that morning, *bopuyan* from yesterday's left-overs, with *pochero* as the highlight of the meal. There there was a dish of *lato* (*latoy*) from the back of the set. This was capped with tea or coffee and *ensaimada* of Cubao St. Honoré bought from the bakery at the mall: the previous night (10:30 pm-ish off to bed).

One way to make any meal an interesting experience is to talk about the food you're eating. To "spice up" the meal, it may even be worthwhile doing a little research beforehand with the encyclopedia or the Net.

Here are a few insights on what we had for lunch.

Appearance, color, size, shape or manner of cooking sometimes formed the basis for naming food. At Seaside Market in Dasmariñas, you'll find what has been described as "bright green plastic-looking grapelike nodes borne on branchlets" on offer in the early mornings. Although this somewhat florid description is certainly not appetizing, its subject definitely is. The seaweed being digested is Lato or Sea Grapes, always eaten fresh with onions and tomatoes, and dressed with vinegar.

Empanada means "covered with bread," though it's often bread dough or shortcrust pastry that is used for this Spanish and Latin American savory turnover, whose fillings range from clams to rabbit, sunflower to pignoli, chickpea to hare, and run just the regular mineral meat and veggie.

Intermingling

Lifestyles, intermingling of foreign cultures and traditions, and diversions of languages contributed to the naming of food. *Chopsuey* is said to have been invented in San Francisco at the end of the 19th century. A Chinese cook, confronted by a demand for food late at night, improvised it from a mixture of leftovers. But Li Hsu-lun points out in his autobiography, "Song Sung Jungsoai," that the dish is from a rural district south of Canton, Toisan, which was home for many of the early Chinese immigrants to California. The name is Cantonese "*tap sui*" or in Mandarin "*tsa sui*" for "mixed-luscious-scraps."

The baked meat now known as Pochero in **Spain**, **we call Pochero in the Philippines**. A hot-pot dish of beef, pork, chicken, ham or chorizo, chickpeas, cabbage, it is often served at family reunions or during the Christmas season. One is just as good for lunch on a rainy Sunday afternoon in October). The Filipino version closely comes from the Spanish original, but indigenization has resulted in an accompanying tomato sauce and eggplant or squash relish (usually on the side) and the use of "*saba*" bananas as a main ingredient.

Ancient history

Cheese goes back to 4000 B.C. The biblical David was asked to deliver "a museum of toasted grain and 10 loaves in his brothers, and 10 cheeses to the field officer" of Jesse's army at the time of his battle with Goliath. The emperor Charlemagne discovered blue cheese—the ancestors of Roquefort—while on a journey within his territory, and a stop at the priory of Rozoi on his exalted him to sample *bleu*, which was later given to him as a tribe.

Tea cultivation originated in China around 3000 B.C. and spread to Japan by about 700 A.D. It wasn't grown in India until the 1840s. "Tsicha," "chi," "teha" are its Chinese names. It's "*ocha*" in Japanese and "*cha*" in Hindi. It is thought to have had a practical origin: the Chinese had to boil their drinking water, so to mask its unpleasant taste, they flavored it with herbs.

A rich mythology, full of dancing goats and sleepy monks, was woven around the **coffee** plant's discovery in Arabia in 900 B.C. Coffee is derived from the Arabic "kawah," meaning strength and vigor or "qahwah" a poetic name for wine. Its brewing is attributed to the Muslims who used it as an attempt to find a non-alcoholic, stimulating drink since the Prophet proclaimed that only abstainers could enter Paradise!

Dessert is derived from the French "desservir," to remove the dishes, or clear the table. And ever since, it has been the collective name for sweet dishes as the last course of a meal. The dessert Crème Br Bruneel was first made as a "gateau" (French for cake) with a custard cream filling by the Ursuline nuns of Bruges in the 17th century. Honoré, the one time bishop of Amiens. He is considered to be the patron saint of pastry cooks and bakers. It is also said that the pastry cook Dubosse (who created the cream) set himself up in the Rue Saint-Honoré Hotel in Paris... hence, the name.

Ref buyer is still waiting for her purchase

THE CONSUMER

Marivella Velasco
GOYOCO

No amount of apology would make up for the inconvenience and ill will caused by failure to deliver goods or services. M. Benitez (mbenitez@yahoo.com) related the following experience so other consumers could learn from it.

Benitez said she went to one of the SM Department Stores sales at Glorietta on Oct. 16 to buy a refrigerator. The ref was badly needed to store food for her son's birthday celebration at home later that day. At Appliances, a saleslady who said her name was Jocelyn assisted her. She was the only one that promised delivery on that day, as Benitez availed the deal. The rest assured they had the items in stock.

So a refrigerator was delivered on Saturday, however. The team people did call that afternoon, but only to say they did not "have the item in stock." They promised to follow up the order with the manufacturer as it could be delivered on Tuesday. But again no ref was delivered.

Benitez said to cancel the order, she would have to go to Glorietta and tell the original store, then arrange purchase with another dealer, which would mean more days of waiting for delivery. "I decided to stick it out with the store and wait for the promised delivery," she said. As of Oct. 27, however, she was still waiting for her ref.

"SM should (be careful about) dealers they work with, or else their name gets dragged into the mud. These dealers deceive consumers to close a sale." And, in the name of customer goodwill, SM should set up a consumer welfare desk right at the SM special sales area.

If the appliances store is still unable to keep its latest promise, we advise Benitez to report the matter to the Department of Trade and Industry-National Capital Region, 12/F Trafalgar Plaza, E. V de la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City (tel. 8184231 to 35, local 1204).

The refrigerator was badly needed to store food for children's party

Bank fine

From a staff member of an office in the University of the Philippines-Diliman: "My deposit account is with Land Bank-Philcoa branch. On my way to the office one morning, I decided to withdraw money from a branch within the campus. To my chagrin, the teller imposed a P50 fine/penalty and unilaterally declassified it from my account. When I asked what the penalty was for, the teller explained that it was because my passbook was from another LBP branch."

We credited with two other banks and learned that, for the protection and security of depositor's accounts, passbooks in general are only negotiable in the issuing bank branch.

If you are a holder of a gift certificate (GC), heed the advice of "Mother-and-Son" of troyabbb@yahoo.com who wrote that three gift certificates were stolen from them while they were shopping at Landmark. They said they discovered the loss only when they were about to pay the cashier with the GC. The loss was immediately reported to customer service so cashiers would be alerted. Their name: never-on-the-stolen, they informed Lilian Esparis and Ma Caramay of customer service.

Mother-and-Son wrote: "When I followed it up later, I was told by the customer service supervisor that the gift certificates were scheduled on the very same day we reported the loss and requested them to alert their cashiers."

We personally called up the supervisor and this was her reply: "Even if we disseminated the information to the cashiers, we couldn't have done anything to stop the transaction. There were just too many cashiers on the different floors. Ang mahaba-haba, sa tagpuan sa long. Pangit naman kung magkakapa-kami ng sign at harap ng buhos ang aming sarkastic ang pangalan ng certificate owner."

The customer service supervisor advised DC holders to note down the number of the certificate. The GC numbers are filed in a master list and encoded in the computer for verification purposes, but the names of DC recipients are not since DC buyers do not have to tell the store who they are giving them to.

Consumers need advice

If any reader has the answer to the query of our latest sender, please e-mail it to us so we can pass it on.

A concerned father wrote: "We bought a secondhand set of encyclopedia from a Divi[illegible] shop in Quezon City. What is the most practical and effective way of disinfecting these books before we let our children, who are all elementary pupils, use them? We are planning to wipe the plastic covers with 75-percent alcohol, but what about the inside pages? Exposing them to the sun seems to be an alternative, but we don't have enough space. Our yard could be the best place, but it scares me just to think of hauling 30 thick volumes to the roof."

Filipino in Consumer Congress

Mr. del Fierro Jr., president of the Confederation for Consumer Protection and Welfare Inc., represented the Philippines in the five-day World Consumers Congress in Lisbon, Portugal. Organized by the London-based Consumers International, the congress was attended by representatives of about 250 non-government consumer and government organizations from 115 countries.

Del Fierro reported: "I am expected to make a bid for the holding of the next World Consumers Congress in Manila. While attending the five-day series of plenary sessions and capacity-building and training programs, I would also present a resolution before the participants appealing to the United States Pepsi Co to honor and pay its liability to Filipino consumers (holders of bottle-caps with winning numbers) who have yet to receive their winnings from the 1992 Super Number Seven contest."

E-mail the author at mgrow@i-manila.com.ph

Bakeshop donates to Chosen Children Village

SINCE October is children's month, Goldilocks Bakeshop is donating a portion of its ensaymada and empanada sales until Nov. 14 to the Chosen Children Village Foundation.

The Chosen Children Village is a unique concept in the care of disabled children. Founded in 1969 by Lina Fullerton, the village was designed to provide a home environment in caring for kids within a family setting. At Chosen Children they have created a community of love, compassion, and growth among the children and staff.

The Village is located in Silang, Cavite. The 2.2-hectare parcel of land now houses cottages, a chapel, a school, a clinic and a rehabilitation center. Funding has not been easy, however, and there is a continuing need to finance the village so more children will be able to thrive in a home environment.

MACSTA

Spanish and Filipino food, prepared just the way Grandma cooks them, are frozen and especially packaged and sealed in microwaveable trays

Heat-and-serve feasts

Text by Rosanna C. Burgos
Photos by Roger Crespo

CASH-STRAPPED office workers and students and busy families are relying more and more on frozen entrées to provide quick, convenient, tasty meals. Frozen foods offer no-fuss nutrition—no ingredients to hunt down at the store, no complicated recipes to follow.

Fortunately, it's not all artery-clogging pizzas and rich ice creams. Take Heinz Home Kitchen Corporation (tel. 6384201/6721119; e-mail: heinz@pacific.net.ph) that sells four and-serve entrees branded as Moving Feasts. Meals include Pastilera, Calderetas, Adobo Oahir Stew, Cocido de Asian, Pescado Japonic, Arroz sin Cebura, Lengua de Angel, Arroz Tablalden, Callos and Arroz Chino con Pollo. These dishes, whose prices range from P50 to P90, are repacked with rice.

"Moving Feasts are neither fast food nor junk food. These are meals prepared home-style, just the way Grandma cooks them. They belong to the fastest growing class of food service in the mixed feasts called home meal replacements. Our cuisine is a fusion of Spanish and Filipino food. But we can also prepare any cuisine on order," says Jesse Reynes, director of sales and marketing.

Fresh viand and rice are frozen in sealed clear plastic trays that are reheated by Moving Feasts' authorized merchants prior to delivery or serving to mid-consumers. This means that one can get a meal as fresh and tasty as when it was first prepared—steaming hot straight from the microwave oven, succulent, ever tender or permeate cooked. Food can also be sealed in its breast form.

Frozen meal providers like Heinz Home Kitchen Corporation have begun replacing basic frozen trays with metallized and sealed

CHEF Salman Gaspar shows Bakers Reyes how to prepare one of Moving Foods' meals.

ARNOLD dela Cruz

Heat-and-serve feasts

From page B1

ed fiber years that function better in the microwave and look better on the table.

Frozen at -14 degrees Celsius, Moving Foods comes in especially-packaged, hermetically-sealed, recyclable and microwavable trays. Tested by the Department of Science and Technology, its shelf life has been proven to be two and a half months. The cooks at Home Meals Kitchen Corp., headed by Solomon Gaspar, don't utilize preservatives to their skilled cooked products. "Only natural organic ingredients to produce mouthwatering servings," Reyes says.

Popular carbo source

Although noodles are also used in Oriental-style entrees, rice is by far the most popular carbohydrate source. And since Filipinos love eating rice, each meal tray of Home Meals Kitchen Corporation contains a generous serving of rice together with entrees.

Parboiled long grain rice is the most popular option for frozen entrees nowadays as it keeps easy. She explains that parboiled rice has been subjected to a steam-pressure treatment to gelatinize starch inside the rice kernel before milling. This results in firmer, more separate grains better able to withstand processing steps than regular-milled white rice.

Fresh and tasty

Moving Foods are prepared in modern and hygienic culinary facilities and under stunning condi tions by Home Meals Kitchen Corporation. The secret of the lasting taste and freshness of each meal, Reyes says, lies in the special way viands are slowly cooked and then rapidly frozen for storage in extra frigid freezers. It helps prevent food from decaying or decomposing because of the total elimination of bacteria and sterilizing of enzyme activity under such extreme cryogenic conditions.

ARNOLD Salcedo (above); Adobo Bakle Boss (right)

Home Meals Kitchen Corporation is currently looking for authorized merchants to distribute Moving Foods in strategic locations. "Since distribution will be by consignment, a merchant needs no additional working capital to operate. All he needs is interest, a microwave oven or steamer and present sales condition.

Home Meals Kitchen Corporation is currently looking for authorized merchants to distribute Moving Foods in strategic locations. "Since distribution will be by consignment, a merchant needs no additional working capital to operate. All he needs is interest, a microwave oven or steamer and Freezer space," Reyes says.

Those overseas direct clients may order a minimum of 20 assorted meal trays directly from Home Meals Kitchen Corporation.

E-mail the author at rbergen@inquirer.com.ph

An overgovernment agency, Kasanggayahan Foundation, Inc., at ng Tarragon Provincial Government

Complete rice meals in a flash

WITH SEACHEM'S Hearty Meals, you can have a complete rice meal in four minutes!

Just open a pack, put it in your microwave oven, and begin enjoying an all-natural, low-fat Seachem's seafood meal. Absolutely no preservatives added. You can also heat it in a regular oven or stir-fry it in pan.

Only fresh quality seafood is used in preparing Seachem's Hearty Meals. You can have your choice of four types: Hearty Meals Seafood Medley, a combination of fish, clam, shrimp and squid meat with mixed vegetables on top of sautéed rice; paella-style Hearty Meals Fish in Tomato and Saffron Sauce, made with battered fish fillet cubes and vegetables, then flavored with aromatic and tasty sauce generously topped on white rice; Hearty Meals Calamares en su Tinta, a combination of white rice and squid cooked in its own ink, done the Spanish way; and Hearty Meals Gulaman in Teriyaki Sauce, a combination of white rice topped with seafood shotgun, mixed vegetables, then seasoned with flavorful teriyaki sauce.

Seachem's all-natural seafood meals are readily available in the following major supermarkets: Cash & Carry, Unimart, Makati Supermarket, Greenhills, Landmark, Hypermarket, Shoppersville and Santi in San Fernando, Pampanga.

Soon they will also be available in selected outlets of SM, WalterMart, Shopwise, Ever, Chowy and Puregold supermarkets.

Ready-to-cook fish products

TGA Food Corp., a Pampanga-based company pioneering in the commercial production and marketing of export-quality grade fish products, has recently launched its own processed ready-to-cook fish products line in Metro Manila supermarkets.

Marketed under the brand name Pacific Fish Company, the ready-to-cook products, which range from tilapia fillets, smoked whole tilapia and fish nuggets, will first be made available at Robinsons and Big 8 Supermart, as well as the Ayala Supermarkets in Pampanga.

TGA has been supplying five-star hotels and restaurants with chilled since 2000 and, through its partnership with Seachem since 2002, has managed to expand its institutional clientele locally through tie-ups with food chains and supermarket distributors.

TGA is able to provide consumers with the freshest processed tilapia since the fish are brought by the fish farmers on the processing plant live and are immediately placed in flash freezers before being transferred to the regular freezers in preparation for processing.

According to Wet president Rene G. Tiang, **the fish products are targeted at the fast-paced** urban centers of Metro Manila in order to **augment the fish protein requirements of the grow**ing metropopulation.

"We sought to address the changing working and eating habits of Filipino households by **making our products relevant and affordable to** consumers," said Tiang.